

# Village of Sherburne Downtown Strategic Plan DRAFT



Prepared By:



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# VISION STATEMENT

*Our attractive, safe, and active Downtown provides a wide variety of dining, arts, and recreational activities for residents and visitors to the region. The Downtown offers easy access to parking and provides convenient traffic flow that encourages it to be the center of community activities. Vision fulfillment is achieved by establishing policies and programs to attract and retain a strong employment base of core businesses, and by preserving and maintaining the charm and history of Sherburne.*

# I. INTRODUCTION

In response to a perceived economic decline and a deterioration of the quality of life in Sherburne and surrounding communities, and with widespread community concern over the condition and fate of the vacant Sherburne Inn, the Village of Sherburne decided that a Strategic Plan for the revitalization of the Downtown area was needed.

This document details the issues facing the downtown today while providing specific guidance regarding identified and prioritized actions that will affect positive change in the downtown. This Downtown Strategic Plan can be used as a tool to identify specific actions that will achieve specific results. The Plan can be used to better identify current and changing economic conditions, as well as to understand the forces behind such conditions and trends. The preparation of this document is useful in serving as the impetus for soliciting public input with respect to identifying the needs, development opportunities, and preferences for future growth; to prioritize attainable goals; and, most importantly, to establish a step-by-step process for achieving a healthy, vibrant downtown that provides basic goods and services to local residents and employees, as well as attracting visitors from outside the area. The benchmarked projects in this document identify opportunities for positive change based upon the priorities identified during the strategic planning process. The information provided in each benchmarked project gives community leaders a guide for implementation and resources. This plan should be continually updated as progress on identified projects is made and issues affecting the downtown change.

To fund the Village of Sherburne's Downtown Strategic Plan project, a request of \$12,000 in grant funds was made to the Technical Assistance Program of the New York State Governor's Office for Small Cities. These funds were awarded to the Village in the Fall of 2003. The Village of Sherburne provided \$4,000 Village funds in addition to \$4,000 of in-kind services as match for the grant. Thoma Development Consultants (TDC) was hired by the Village to assist in the preparation of the plan. Two sub-consultants also completed work related to the development of the Plan; Crawford and Stearns, Architects and Preservation Planners of Syracuse, New York, and Cynthia Bickford Teter, RLA, of Homer, New York. Their roles are detailed in Part II, Process.

Work on the Strategic Plan began in the summer of 2004. To formulate the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan, it was important to convene a committee of local stakeholders to guide the process. This would assure that the Strategic Plan was locally driven. This Advisory Committee provided significant assistance in the development of this Plan through participation in work sessions, assisting in surveys, and guiding the direction of the Plan. A downtown inventory and surveys were undertaken to provide background data on the downtown and to allow for additional public input. The full process used to develop the plan is detailed fully in Part II, Process.

## II. PROCESS

### ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Since there was not an existing entity in the community charged with the responsibility of dealing with downtown issues, it was determined that a local Advisory Committee, comprised of persons with diverse backgrounds and expertise, should be established. Persons associated with local businesses, civic organizations, and municipal governments or boards were included in the group. The Advisory Committee Members and their affiliation(s) are:

Del Law	Fred Von Mechow
Patty Von Mechow	Paul Del Fuoco
Marge Craine	Joyce Stewart
Mike Westbrook	Andy Jenne
Sarah Piazzi	Nancy Salem
Janice Bays	William Acee

This Advisory Committee was responsible for guiding the planning process; developing the Vision Statement; defining the needs, direction, and goals, of the downtown; and determining actions to meet those goals. Thoma Development Consultants (TDC), served as facilitator for the Advisory Committee. Committee members also assisted in conducting a survey of business owners. This plan and the conclusions made in it are reflective of the views of the members of the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee's knowledge and vested interest in the Study Area and the Village were assets to the project.

### STUDY AREA

The Village of Sherburne does not have a zoned “Central Business District” that clearly delineates the downtown area. Therefore, the first job of the Advisory Committee was to establish boundaries for the study area. It was determined that the Study should focus on the intersection of Route 80 (East and West State Street) and Route 12 (North and South Main Street. Generally the railroad forms the western boundary, Church Street forms the northern boundary, and Classic Street forms the eastern boundary. The Study Area includes only the first few lots on South Main Street. Map 1 in Appendix 1 shows the boundaries of the Study area, hereinafter referred to as the “downtown”.

## STUDY METHODOLOGY

**Downtown Strategic Plan** - The members of the Advisory Committee were assembled at an initial meeting to discuss the project and outline the scope of the study. Following the initial meeting, a series of working sessions were held throughout the fall of 2004 to determine the needs of the downtown and create a vision for its revitalization. The first activity was the development of a formal Vision Statement for the future of the Sherburne Downtown. This Vision Statement formed the touchstone for the rest of the planning study, and all activities recommended in the plan are consistent with the Vision Statement. The Vision Statement states:

*Our attractive, safe, and active Downtown provides a wide variety of dining, arts, and recreational activities for residents and visitors to the region. The Downtown offers easy access to parking and provides convenient traffic flow that encourages it to be the center of community activities. Vision fulfillment is achieved by establishing policies and programs to attract and retain a strong employment base of core businesses, and by preserving and maintaining the charm and history of Sherburne.*

The Statement places great emphasis on maintaining the downtown's historic character, while creating a diverse economy.

The Advisory Committee identified the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges facing the Sherburne downtown area. Possible actions to address identified issues were discussed, as were the causes of past failures. A focus group meeting with local high school students was also held to gauge their opinion on the current state of the downtown, and to gather their input regarding its future direction. A community-wide meeting was held in \_\_\_\_\_ to allow for additional citizen input.

Based on the initial priorities discussed, and the results of the surveys detailed below, the goal of the Committee was to prioritize downtown issues and formulate an Action Agenda that would attempt to address the most urgent needs of the Study Area. The process of prioritizing needs was aided by a review of relevant demographic information.

**Sherburne Inn and Southwest Quadrant Redevelopment** - In addition to undertaking an overall Downtown Strategic Planning process and the development of overall downtown revitalization strategies, specific emphasis was placed on the redevelopment of the vacant Sherburne Inn and the surrounding area, referred to herein as the "Southwest Quadrant". Three specific activities were undertaken as part of this effort. They include:

*Architectural Conditions Study* – A general conditions study and building code review of the Inn was completed by Crawford and Stearns Architects and Preservation Planners. Their report, included herein as Appendix 2, summarizes the general condition of the Inn, reviews building code and other issues impacting redevelopment options, provides conceptual redevelopment designs including construction of a new entrance and elevator, and general redevelopment cost estimates.

*Market Research* – Thoma Development Consultants completed basic market research for potential reuse options for the Sherburne Inn. These potential reuses were identified by the Advisory Committee. This research is not intended to serve as a market study for reuses or to ascertain that a reuse option is feasible, but to provide basic market information for reuses. The Market Research information is included in Appendix 3.

*Southwest Quadrant Redevelopment Plan* – Based on input from the Advisory Committee, Consultant Cynthia Teter, RLA, developed two alternative site plans for the redevelopment of the Southwest Quadrant, including the Sherburne Inn, Big M Supermarket, Post Office, and a number of other commercial buildings. This Redevelopment Plan is included as Appendix 4.

Since the issues related to the Sherburne Inn and the Southwest Quadrant Redevelopment Plan are unique to that portion of the downtown, recommendations related to these issues are not included in the Action Agenda, but are detailed separately in Part V.

## **SURVEYS**

Once the study area was defined, an on-site inventory of each of the downtown area's buildings was undertaken. Property owners, business owners, and downtown customers were also surveyed. The surveys were used to support or refute information gathered on-site and to identify issues and trends in the downtown. These surveys are detailed below.

**Exterior Visual Survey/Inventory** - In order to quantify the existing uses and conditions of downtown Sherburne, a comprehensive inventory of the downtown was undertaken in the fall of 2001. The survey had two primary focuses: (1) to identify and quantify the current uses of the downtown, and (2) to assess the general condition of the structures located within the Study Area. The survey was completed using information gathered from Chenango County Real Property Tax records, tax maps, and the on-site observations. A written survey report was completed for each tax parcel. Secondary outbuildings (small storage sheds, garages) were not included in the survey. A computer database was developed to track all of the survey results.

**Property Owner Survey** – A survey was mailed to all property owners in the downtown. The purpose of the survey was to identify current uses and occupants of buildings, and to gather input on the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the downtown. Survey respondents were generally in agreement regarding the primary strengths and weaknesses related to the downtown. The downtown’s convenient location on several state highways, close proximity of businesses and government offices, historic character and architecture, good service, and “small town atmosphere” were often cited as important assets to the downtown. Identified weaknesses included the condition of some buildings in the downtown, taxes, the lack of variety of available goods, the loss of local shoppers to nearby regional shopping centers, and the neglected condition of the Sherburne Inn.

**Business Owner Survey** – A survey was also distributed to individual business in the downtown based upon input from the Advisory Committee. The survey format was similar to that used in the Property Owner Survey and, although the response rate was low, resulted in similar responses.

The survey instruments used in the above surveys are included in Appendix 5.



### III. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Based on the input of the Advisory Committee, community demographics, the downtown inventory, survey data, and other sources, detailed below is a general summary of the status of the Sherburne downtown and the issues impacting it. It should be noted that, in the large sense, downtown Sherburne is a relatively healthy downtown with architecturally significant buildings, an attractive streetscape, with businesses and services that meet many of the needs of the community.

#### **BUSINESSES AND SERVICES**

The downtown inventory revealed that downtown Sherburne has a relatively healthy mix of various uses, including retail, local services, and government offices. Interestingly, it appears as though one of the Downtown's strongest anchors is not a retail store, but the Post Office. While there is reportedly a high failure rate among new businesses, the downtown is fortunate to have retained many long-standing businesses. The downtown does appear to lack a strong retail base.

#### **BUILDING CONDITIONS**

As stated previously, the Village of Sherburne downtown has a unique collection of commercial buildings of various ages and architectural styles. This architectural heritage is one of the downtown's strongest assets. Preservation of the historic character of the downtown should be an important part of any revitalization effort. Unfortunately, while many structures in the Downtown are well preserved and maintained, a number are in various states of disrepair or neglect, their intrinsic architectural beauty hidden behind inappropriate signage, facades, or additions the Sherburne Inn creates the most significant visual distraction due to its condition.

As part of the downtown inventory detailed above, the general condition and the appearance of all buildings were ranked as "poor", "fair", "good", and "excellent". Regarding condition, only two buildings are considered "poor", 18% are considered "fair", 64% were considered "good", and 18% are considered to be in "excellent" condition. Regarding appearance, most buildings are classified as "good". Many facades, however, need general improvements, and have poor signage, inappropriate renovations, and poor window displays. The lack of attention to quality design and sound maintenance practices are issues in the downtown, particularly as the few poorly maintained and otherwise unattractive properties detract from the inherent historic charm of the community center. The Village does not have any sign or design ordinances.

The commercial core of the downtown is surrounded by residential properties. Most of these dwelling units are late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century wood framed homes that are in generally good condition. A major exception to this is a collection of residential properties on Route 12 just north of the downtown. This poor quality housing, while not located in the downtown, is a significant issue that must be addressed as part of any commercial revitalization efforts, as it gives a very poor impression to visitors of the community.

High taxes, low rents, and the lack of financial incentives, are among the reasons noted for the condition of existing buildings.

## **PARKING AND TRAFFIC FLOW**

Unlike most downtowns, parking is not a significant problem in the Sherburne downtown. There are several public lots located in various parts of the downtown, in addition to private parking lots. The public lots are generally well maintained. The parking area servicing the Post Office and surrounding buildings tends to be congested at times, and is often at or near capacity. Traffic flow in and out of this lot is difficult, particularly when negotiating left hand turns associated with busy Route 80. Other public lots in the downtown could benefit from improved lighting, signage, and landscaping.

Traffic flow in the Downtown is not a significant issue, although several issues have been identified related to the busy traffic on Routes 12 and 80. Traffic signaling at the Route 12 and 80 intersection is problematic, particularly for traffic attempting a left turn onto East State Street. This is caused by an extended green light for traffic heading north on Route 12. As aforementioned, access in and out of the parking lot south of Route 80 is difficult, particularly due to one way entrances and exits and heavy traffic.

## **PEDESTRIAN ACCESS**

The downtown provides good pedestrian access, with wide, well maintained, and well landscaped sidewalks. The good condition of the streetscape is attributable to a major streetscape renovation completed over ten years ago. The heavy traffic and wide roadway surfaces at the intersection of Routes 12 and 80 can make crossing the street at this location difficult.

## **VACANCIES**

The Downtown Inventory revealed that there are a number of vacancies at the first floor levels, although the number is quite low. The vacancy rate for upper floors is much higher than at street levels. These vacancy rates were determined primarily through an exterior observation only, and may be even higher than suspected. Most notable are the Sherburne Inn; the former Mill building, most recently used as a used book store; and the former bank building, an impressive Second Empire style building located at the corner of State and Main. Fully utilizing all vacant space, particularly first floor vacant space, is important to a revitalization effort. Conversely, the availability of vacant space provides the opportunity for attracting new businesses into the downtown.

## **FIRST IMPRESSION OF THE DOWNTOWN**

The Sherburne downtown is located at a major crossroads (Route 12 and Route 80), which handles very large volumes of through traffic. It is important to provide through-travelers, visitors, and commuters with a favorable impression of the downtown. The need to define clear entrances or gateways into downtown is important. Currently the entrances to the immediate downtown area are somewhat unattractive, and do not create a strong “sense of place”. Thus is most true at the northern entrance to the Village. This stretch of Route 12 includes a mix of residential and later 20<sup>th</sup> commercial development that does not provide a clear sense of where the downtown begins. The other three entrances to the downtown are better, although western entrances on Route 80 could benefit from aesthetic improvements.

## **DOWNTOWN COORDINATION AND ORGANIZATION**

Downtown Sherburne does not have an organization such as a Downtown Business Association that is committed to bringing about its renewal and helping to realize projects proposed in the Action Agenda. The Village has been involved in implementing infrastructure projects, including the previous streetscaping project, and in administering a business loan program, but these are not part of a larger, coordinated revitalization program. There is no structure for the involvement of local business and property owners in downtown issues. This is likely attributable, in part, to the small number of businesses in the downtown. Some type of formalized organization for the downtown is important for continuing revitalization of the community center.

## IV. ACTION AGENDA

Via the process detailed above, the Advisory Committee, in tandem with Thoma Development Consultants, developed specific actions that, if undertaken, should bring positive change for downtown Sherburne. These actions are benchmarked below. Each benchmarked project describes the issue to be addressed, the basic tasks needed to implement the project, the indicator to measure success, the project leader, project partners, and potential resources. An identified resource may be a potential funding source for the project, or may be an entity that can provide technical assistance in project development. While this Action Agenda and the projects benchmarked herein provide a blueprint for revitalizing Sherburne's downtown area, this Action Agenda should be considered a living document that should be reevaluated and updated as projects are completed and priorities change.

## **BENCHMARK # 1**

### **PROBLEM/OPPORTUNITY 1 – Condition of Downtown Buildings**

The Village of Sherburne downtown is blessed with a varied collection of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century structures, many of which are historic commercial blocks. Primarily two and three stories, the architectural styles are particularly unique, with traditional Italianate structures supplemented with Gothic Revival, Second Empire, and even Federally inspired structures. Unfortunately, a number of the downtown buildings are poorly maintained, with varying states of disrepair, and several are new buildings that are inconsistent with the historic fabric of the area. Facades are in need of paint, new signs, awnings, and other repairs. A decayed downtown reflects poorly on the entire community, and it is vital that the Village strive to maintain its commercial structures while preserving and restoring their historic integrity.

#### **PROJECT 1.1**

**Provide a fair and balanced building codes enforcement policy** - Local codes, particularly those involving multi-story commercial buildings should be reviewed as should local enforcement policies. The new International Building Code that was enacted in New York State several years ago includes property maintenance regulations. The Village should meet with Code enforcement officials to clarify their ability to enforce these property maintenance codes, and to determine if the Village should enact more stringent regulations. Such local regulations or codes would need to be approved by the State. Oftentimes, the level of building code enforcement is reflected in the resources the local community commits to enforcement. The Village should review the resources they commit to building code enforcement and make adjustments as needed. Building owners must be aware of, and should be made to comply with, local and State codes. However, over-aggressive enforcement can stifle activity in the downtown and do more harm than good. The Village should form a partnership with property owners and work cooperatively with them and the County's Code Enforcers, to ensure local and State building codes are met.

**INDICATOR** – Review of building code enforcement standards

#### **TASKS**

- Appoint a committee of local and county government officials, property owners, and other representatives to review existing codes and enforcement methods and recommend revisions. New York State Department of State may be able to provide assistance to the committee in this endeavor.
- Recommended changes/updates should be presented to the Village Board for subsequent approval.

- The Village should closely review the resources allocated for building code enforcement to ensure that they are sufficient to allow the proper and full implementation enforcement of any new local building regulations.

## **PROJECT LEADER**

Village of Sherburne

## **POTENTIAL PARTNERS**

Chenango County  
Building Code Enforcement Officers  
Property Owners

## **RESOURCES**

Village of Sherburne  
NYS Department of State  
Chenango County

## **PROJECT 1.2**

**Revise the Village’s sign ordinance** – The Village’s does not have an existing sign ordinance. An appropriate sign ordinance/guidelines should be drafted and adopted. A revised ordinance could regulate the entire Village or could address only the downtown area through the creation of an overlay district. While older sign ordinances tended to focus on regulation (maximum sizes, physical characteristics, etc.), newer ordinances are often more progressive, and focus on what a community *wants* rather than what they *don’t* want. These ordinances are often presented in the form of guidelines and are accompanied by sketches, drawings, and pictures, providing a visual representation desired sign design and placement. The guidelines should control inappropriate signage, but should also allow, and indeed encourage, creative and artistic signs that bring life into a downtown. It is important to note that, under the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment to the Constitution, sign ordinances must content neutral. New sign guidelines should consider methods to encourage replacement of inappropriate signs. A new sign ordinance is the first step in improving the visual image of downtown Sherburne.

**INDICATOR** – New sign ordinance enacted

## **TASKS**

- Establish a committee to draft new ordinance (or assign task to existing Planning Board)

- Research existing models for progressive sign ordinances, with assistance from County Planning Office
- Draft new ordinance
- Adopt new ordinance

## **PROJECT LEADER**

Village Of Sherburne

## **POTENTIAL PARTNERS**

Chenango County Planning Department  
Village of Sherburne Planning Board

## **RESOURCES**

NYS Department of State  
American Planning Association  
New York Planning Federation  
CaRDI  
Preservation League of New York State

## **PROJECT 1.3**

**Develop a micro-grant program to assist in signage replacement** – Signs that are deteriorated, unsightly, or incompatible with the historic character give the downtown a disjointed and neglected appearance. In addition, they often do not adequately reflect the quality of the businesses they advertise. Replacement of existing business signs with new, higher quality signs that are in keeping with the downtown's desired character and architecture can have a profound impact on the downtown for a minimal cost. It will also directly benefit individual businesses by improving their single most important piece of advertising. The Village should set aside \$5,000 in UDAG program income to provide micro-grants up to \$500 to \$750 per business to replace and upgrade their business signs. All new signs should be in compliance with the updated sign ordinance detailed in Project 2.2 above.

**INDICATOR** – Number of signs replaced

## TASKS

- Set aside UDAG funds
- Establish a simple application process
- Implement program

## PROJECT LEADER

Village of Sherburne

## POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Local business owners  
Local property owners

## RESOURCES

Village of Sherburne

## PROJECT 1.4

**Develop a Downtown Façade Program** – A number buildings in the downtown suffer from neglect and deferred maintenance, or are incompatible with the character of the downtown. Heavy property tax burdens and the limited ability of downtown property owners to garner sufficient rents can limit the funds available for building maintenance. The Village should set aside \$50,000 - \$100,000 of UDAG program income to establish a local revolving loan fund for downtown building improvements. Draft guidelines for a program are included in **Appendix 3**. Local lenders should be asked to participate by offering special loan programs/rates for program participants. The program should include a mechanism for design review to ensure that appropriate repairs/changes are made. In addition to, or in substitute of, the Village should consider supporting an application to the New York Main Street Program through the Division of Housing and Community Renewal. This program can provide up to \$100,000 in 50/50 matching funds for façade improvements. Funds are also available for interior renovations. The program is limited to non-profit organizations, so the Village cannot be the lead applicant. The Partnership for Community Development in Hamilton successfully secured such façade improvement funding for the Village of Earlville, and may be willing to partner with the Village on a program. UDAG funds could be used to support the administrative costs of a program.

**INDICATOR** – Number of facades improved



## **TASKS**

- Set aside UDAG funds
- Contact Partnership for Community Development to ascertain interests
- Determine Design Review Process
- Establish a simple application process
- Market program
- Implement program

## **PROJECT LEADER**

Village of Sherburne

## **POTENTIAL PARTNERS**

Local Property owners  
Partnership for Community Development  
Chenango County Economic Development Office

## **RESOURCES**

Village of Sherburne  
NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal  
Local lending institutions

## **BENCHMARK #2**

### **PROBLEM/OPPORTUNITY 2 – Downtown Entrances**

The Village of Sherburne is served by two major highways, including NYS Route 8), and NYS Route 12. It is important make the entrances into the downtown as attractive and inviting as possible in order to provide a positive first impression to commuters and through-travelers.

#### **PROJECT 2.1**

**Enhance the “Gateways” into Downtown** – A positive first impression is important in attracting and keeping customers in the downtown. The Sherburne downtown has four major entrances or gateways into downtown. The two that require the most attention are the north and west entrances. Physical improvements should be made to these areas, including, as needed, sidewalks, curbing and paving, although these are generally in good condition. Trees and other landscaping should be installed. Larger street trees at the western entrance, near the railroad tracks, would create a sense of arrival from the open farmland of the river valley. Efforts should focus on creating a “sense of arrival” at the primary entrances.

**INDICATOR** – Number of improvements made

#### **TASKS**

- Hire a landscape architect to prepare conceptual gateway designs
- Prioritize work items and create a multi-year work plan
- Implement improvement projects in keeping with plan
- Maintain improvements

#### **PROJECT LEADER**

Village of Sherburne

## **POTENTIAL PARTNERS**

Downtown Property Owners  
Downtown Business Owners

## **RESOURCES**

Downtown Business/Property Owners  
Village of Sherburne  
Division of Housing of Housing and Community Renewal/NY Main Street  
Small Cities Community Development Block Grant  
NY Urban and Community Forestry Program

## **PROJECT 2.2**

**Removal/Improvement of Blighting Structures** – Dilapidated, vacant, and substandard buildings visually detract from the northern entrance to the downtown, and give the community a neglected feel. Although not in the downtown, these structures should either be razed, or substantially renovated. Revised property maintenance codes detailed under 1.1 may provide the Village with greater leverage in forcing removal or repair. If necessary, the Village may need to take ownership of the structures and complete demolition.

**INDICATOR** – Dilapidated buildings mitigated

## **TASKS**

- Determine ownership status of structures
- Set up meeting with the owner(s), Village, Village Attorney, and County representatives (as appropriate) to work out solution
- Utilize all resources of the Village and County to force renovation or removal, as necessary
- As a last resort, assume ownership and remove or renovate.

## **PROJECT LEADER**

Village of Sherburne

## POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Chenango County  
Code Enforcement Office

## RESOURCES

Village of Sherburne  
Chenango County  
Small Cities Community Development Block Grant  
NYS Department of State  
UDAG Program Income

## PROJECT 2.3

**Community Information Signage** – The community reportedly relies on a portable plastic sign owned by the fire department to advertise community events. When in use, this sign is placed in front of the church near the intersection of Routes 12 and 80. Such signs are a common and very effective way to share community events with residents and visitors. Unfortunately, the sign used in Sherburne is somewhat unattractive and incompatible with the historic character of downtown. The community should take a proactive and positive approach to developing a signage/information system or method that provides the positive benefits of advertising community events, and is more compatible with the downtown. An electronic sign with programmable messages is one option. If used, the sign should be a permanent installation, set in an attractive, “historic” frame, most likely in painted wood, and surrounded by quality landscaping. Although not technically compatible with the historic downtown, it would be a great improvement over the current signage, and would give the Village an up-to-date aura. Another option would be a permanent, wooden, “community events” sign that has an open center section where temporary signs can be placed. This option would be more compatible with the downtown, but would be more difficult for community organizations to place notices on. Advertising should be limited to one event at a time, so the sign does not become a community bulletin board. Other creative “win-win” solutions that meet every parties’ needs should be considered. Whichever option is chosen, the sign should be sited in a better location, rather than on the Village Green. Somewhere along north Main Street, a block or so north of downtown, might be a suitable location, and could also be used to visually improve that area.

**INDICATOR** – New signage developed

## **TASKS**

- Work collaboratively with fire department and other organizations to determine solution.
- Develop designs and costs
- Determine financing (perhaps through minimal fee schedule)
- Construct/implement new signage
- Maintain improvements

## **PROJECT LEADER**

Village of Sherburne

## **POTENTIAL PARTNERS**

Sherburne Fire Department  
Community Organizations  
Village Planning Board

## **RESOURCES**

Village of Sherburne  
Community Organizations  
Sherburne Fire Department

## BENCHMARK #3

### PROBLEM/OPPORTUNITY 3 – Economic Stability

In order for the downtown to be successful, downtown businesses must be economically successful. Downtown Sherburne is fortunate in that it has a relatively low vacancy rate, and a number of established businesses that have anchored the downtown for years. The downtown has also been fortunate to retain other downtown anchors, including municipal offices, the library, and the post office. The importance of these institutional anchors to the economic strength of the downtown cannot be overstated. The downtown struggles to meet the demands of the local population and loses business to nearby communities and regional shopping centers. For the most part, the downtown does not appear to fully capitalize on the volume of through traffic, forfeiting this revenue source to other communities.

#### PROJECT 3.1

**Uniform, extended hours/employee discount program** – Shoppers today are accustomed to business hours that fit their busy schedules. That means extended evening and weekend hours. Nearly every mall and regional shopping center offers hours that meet customers' needs, and if similar convenient access to goods and services is not available in the downtown, they will simply shop elsewhere. A survey of Sherburne businesses shows that each one opens and closes at different hours. Establishing mutually agreed upon downtown business hours is perhaps one of the most difficult tasks a downtown can undertake, but one that is vital to its survival. As a start, it is recommended that downtown businesses agree to open and close at a uniform time, and offer evening hours (perhaps until 7pm) at least once per week. Obviously there would be exceptions to this, as certain business such a convenience stores and restaurants would want to be open far later than typical retail stores. Nevertheless, consistent, or at least similar, hours are important.

Since public perception is very difficult to change, businesses should agree to commit to evening hours for a *minimum* of 6 to 12 months. In order to stimulate activity for these extended hours, and to draw employees from local businesses downtown, the extended hours should be tied to a local employees discount program. Any program should be kept simple. For example, if an employee from the School District shows their school ID between 5 and 7pm on Thursday, they get a 10% discount off their purchase. Such a program would need to be marketed directly to employees of eligible companies.

#### INDICATORS

- Number of business with extended hours
- Number of new customers/increased business activity

## **TASKS**

- Determine appropriate, consistent business hours as well as days and times to offer extended evening hours
- Determine which businesses to include in discount program.
- Meet with leader of chosen business(es) to discuss program and modify as needed.
- Market the program to all downtown businesses to secure their participation. A “sign-up” sheet “committing” business owners to a trial period may be considered
- Determine appropriate time of the year to launch program. The Christmas season or spring may be appropriate times
- Market program directly to employees with assistance from employers. A flyer attached to paychecks may be considered. Such direct marketing should occur at least once per month.
- After 6 to 12 month trial period, evaluate the success of the program, and make changes as needed. If significant success is achieved, the discount program could possible be phased out.

## **PROJECT LEADER**

Downtown Businesses

## **POTENTIAL PARTNERS**

Downtown Business Owners  
Local employers

## **RESOURCES**

Village of Sherburne  
Downtown Business Owners

## **PROJECT 3.2**

**Business Mentoring Program** – The failure rate of new businesses is relatively high, and many potentially successful business fail due to the inexperience of new entrepreneurs. Sherburne is blessed with a number of long-standing downtown businesses that have survived, and thrived, over the years. Although technical assistance to new entrepreneurs is available, ongoing mentoring assistance would be helpful. A list of local businesspeople willing to mentor a new entrepreneur should be established. As new businesses are proposed, they should be matched with a suitable mentor. This mentor would be available to a new entrepreneur from business development through the first few years of operation, providing advice on business plans, marketing, staffing, day-to-day operations, and other support/advice as may be needed. Such a program would also benefit the mentor since, as the number of strong businesses in the downtown grow, their business should benefit as well.

### **INDICATORS**

Number of mentors identified  
Number of new businesses provided mentoring

### **TASKS**

- Identify potential mentors
- Market availability of mentors to realtors, lenders, Small Business Development Center, and other outlets
- Match new businesses with appropriate mentors
- After 24 month trial period, evaluate the success of the program, and make changes as needed.

### **PROJECT LEADER**

Downtown Businesses

### **POTENTIAL PARTNERS**

Downtown Business Owners  
Local lenders  
Small Business Development Center  
Village of Sherburne



## RESOURCES

Chamber of Commerce  
Downtown Business Owners  
County Economic Development Office  
Partnership for Community Development

## PROJECT 3.3

**Microenterprise Program** – A microenterprise is typically defined as any small business with five or fewer employees. These are the types of businesses often found in downtown areas. A microenterprise program provides financial support with technical assistance and training for new business development and to assist existing businesses to grow. Sherburne is likely not large enough to support a microenterprise program on its own, and should partner with Chenango County or other nearby communities to establish a program that would be available to microenterprises in its downtown. Such a program would support the creation of new businesses in the downtown, and fill vacant storefronts.

## INDICATORS

Number of new business  
Number of businesses/persons assisted.

## TASKS

- Work with the County, Chamber of Commerce, or other organization to develop support for a microenterprise program
- Support and encourage the development of a microenterprise program.
- Market availability of the program throughout the community to ensure participations of local businesses in the program

## PROJECT LEADER

Chenango County

## POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Downtown Business Owners  
Local lenders  
Partnership for Community Development

Village of Sherburne

## **RESOURCES**

Small Cities Community Development Block Grant  
County Economic Development Office  
Partnership for Community Development

## **PROJECT 3.4**

**Empire Zone** – The City of Norwich and Chenango County has long had an Empire Zone. The Zone provides significant benefits to businesses and industries located in the Zone. The Village should work with Chenango County and the Chenango County Empire Zone to include all or parts of Downtown Sherburne in the Zone. At a minimum, the Sherburne Inn property should be included in the Empire Zone as this will greatly enhance the marketability of the property.

## **INDICATORS**

Amount of Empire Zone acreage

## **TASKS**

- Meet with County and Empire Zone officials to discuss inclusion of the downtown and/or Inn property in the Empire Zone
- Assist the County in whatever way possible to support the Zone boundary amendment process

## **PROJECT LEADER**

Village of Sherburne

## **POTENTIAL PARTNERS**

Chenango County Empire Zone  
Downtown Business Owners  
Downtown Property Owners

## **RESOURCES**

Chenango County

## **BENCHMARK #4**

### **PROBLEM/OPPORTUNITY 4 – Downtown Environment**

The streetscapes in the downtown are in excellent condition. A well designed and implemented streetscape improvement project a number of years ago give the downtown an historic and gracious appearance. The streets are in good condition, as are the curbing and sidewalks. The Village must remain vigilant in maintaining these improvements and continue to institute further improvements to keep the downtown in good physical shape. The downtown is also located on two busy State highways, is adjacent to a railroad, and has an operating industry. The impacts of these on noise, pollution, smell, etc., must be monitored and mitigated as needed.

#### **PROJECT 4.1**

**Streetscape Improvements** – As aforementioned, the streetscapes in Sherburne are generally attractive and in good condition. They are in need of minor maintenance/improvements. For instance, the bases of the period streetlamps need to be replaced/upgraded, and the decorative brick sidewalk paving needs to be cleaned.

**INDICATOR** – Improvement projects undertaken

#### **TASKS**

- Identify solution to repair streetlamps and fix as funds are available
- Contact Trowbridge and Wolf, the original designers of the streetscape project to determine the best method of cleaning the brick pavers. Sandblasting and harsh chemicals should not be used. High-pressure water may wash away the sand between the pavers that would need to be replaced.
- Set up an annual inspection of the downtown with a checklist, so that emerging problems can be identified and addressed quickly

#### **PROJECT LEADER**

Village of Sherburne

## POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Downtown Business Owners  
Downtown Property Owners  
Interested Residents

## RESOURCES

Village of Sherburne  
New York Housing Trust Fund Corporation/New York Main Street

## PROJECT 4.2

**Industrial Odor Mitigation** – The Chenango Pet Foods facility continues a long tradition of pet food manufacturing in the community, and their location adjacent to the downtown has been used for manufacturing for many decades. The community benefits from the jobs and tax base the company provides. Unfortunately, the facility occasionally creates an unpleasant “pet food” odor that permeates the downtown. While most residents are resigned to the smell, it is nevertheless a hindrance to downtown revitalization efforts as well as efforts to revitalize the neighboring Sherburne Inn. The Village has worked with the company on effort to mitigate the odors, but there is apparently no obvious remedy. The Village and the downtown business community should continue to work cooperatively with the company in an ongoing effort to reduce odors emanating from the facility and, if necessary, secure funding for odor mitigation efforts.

**INDICATOR** – Pet food odors reduced

## TASKS

- Begin to track dates, times, and duration of odor events as this may help to identify problem(s).
- The Village or community representatives should meet regularly (every 6-12 months) with company representatives to monitor problems and to identify potential solutions. A cooperative rather than a regulatory stance should be taken
- Support efforts to mitigate odors, including pursuing funding opportunities to assist the company in undertaking upgrades to facilities that would mitigate odors
- Implement projects to reduce the duration, frequency, intensity of odor events

## **PROJECT LEADER**

Village of Sherburne

## **POTENTIAL PARTNERS**

Chenango Pet Foods  
Downtown Business and Property Owners

## **RESOURCES**

Chenango Pet Foods

## **BENCHMARK #5**

### **PROBLEM/OPPORTUNITY 5 - Organization**

In order for positive and proactive change to occur, and for the strategies and recommendations of this and other plans to be implemented, a framework for implementation must be established. Currently, no organization has, as its sole mission, a focus on the Sherburne downtown area. There are a number of organizational models that could be utilized, ranging from a loose affiliation or network of existing groups or organizations to a highly structured, incorporated, non-profit organization. Due to the small nature of the downtown, it is unlikely that a highly structured Main Street program can be developed. Some type of organization, however, is vital to the success of the downtown, and downtown businesses.

#### **PROJECT 5.1**

**Develop a downtown business organization** - Due to the relatively small number of businesses and property owners in the downtown, a rather informal organizational structure should be established. As the organization succeeds, its organizational structure can become more formalized. It may be desirable to open the organization membership to any Village business, but the primary focus should remain on the downtown. At the least, this organization of business and property owners should meet once a month to discuss mutual issues of concern. This organization should work to organize one or two small events per year, and should tackle other downtown projects, such as joint hours, business mentoring, and similar initiatives.

The Partnership for Community Development in Hamilton, as well as the County Chamber of Commerce, may be able to provide assistance in the formation of a local business organization.

At some point, a more formal “Main Street” program would greatly benefit the downtown. The National Trust for Historic Preservation created the Main Street model and it has been successfully used to revitalize downtowns throughout the nation. The program outlines four broad areas important to downtown revitalization including Organization, Design, Promotion, and Economic Restructuring. It also stresses that revitalization efforts undertaken in partnership with the various downtown stakeholders, and that efforts must be incremental in nature. A formal Main Street Program usually has a paid staff person, a Main Street Manager, who runs the program. Sherburne is likely not large enough to sustain a Main Street program of its own, but could partner with other nearby communities to share a Main Street Manager.

**INDICATOR** – Downtown organization formed

## **TASKS**

- Identify a core group of individuals to act as a base for the organization
- Core members, or representative thereof, should attend available Main Street/downtown revitalization training workshops, such as the New York Conference of Mayor’s Main Street Conference.
- Core members should develop a plan of action for initial activities
- Bring together all business and property owners, as well as government and interested individuals at an initial meeting
- Implement revitalization activities, focusing on small, easily accomplished, highly visible projects first

## **PROJECT LEADER**

Local Interested business/property owners

## **POTENTIAL PARTNERS**

Downtown Business Owners  
Downtown Property Owners  
Interested Residents

## **RESOURCES**

Chamber of Commerce  
Partnership for Community Development  
CaRDI  
New York Main Street Alliance

## **BENCHMARK #5**

### **PROBLEM/OPPORTUNITY 6 – Community Trail**

The possibility of developing a multi-use trail connecting the Rogers Environmental Center to the downtown, Paddleford Park, Rexford Falls, and perhaps the Village reservoir has been discussed in recent years. The development of such a trail, particularly the segment connecting the Rogers Center to the downtown, would be an opportunity for the downtown.

#### **PROJECT 6.1**

**Develop community trail** – A multi-purpose trail should be constructed from the Rogers Center on the west wall of the Chenango River Valley to the downtown on the east valley wall. The trail should enter the downtown near the Southwest Quadrant/West State Street. This would not only provide a recreational outlet for Village residents, but would provide an opportunity for visitors to the center to hike into the Village. The Village should establish an ad hoc committee focused on moving a trail project forward.

**INDICATOR** – trail constructed

#### **TASKS**

- Establish a committee to focus on trail development
- Coordinate development with the Rogers Center
- Complete a preliminary design to ascertain construction cost and easements needed for construction
- Obtain easements/right of ways
- Secure funds and construct trail

#### **PROJECT LEADER**

Village of Sherburne/Trail Committee



## **POTENTIAL PARTNERS**

DEC/Rogers Environmental Center  
Chenango Land Trust  
SHASTA  
Interested Residents  
Property Owners

## **RESOURCES**

DEC/Rogers Environmental Center  
NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation  
NYS DOT/Intermodal Transportation program  
Chenango Land Trust

# V. SHERBURNE INN AND SOUTHWEST QUADRANT REDEVELOPMENT

## THE SHERBURNE INN

The former Sherburne Inn is prominently located on the southwest corner of Route 12 and 80, and dominates the Sherburne downtown. The building has been a local landmark in the community for nearly 100 years. Over the decades the building has slowly deteriorated, until closing permanently several years ago. The structure is now vacant and is listed for sale with an asking price of \$269,000. Reportedly several years of back property taxes are owed. There are at least three known mortgages on the building, including one held by the Village of Sherburne.

The structure is at the center of the community's attention. A Community Needs Assessment completed in 2003 revealed that current condition of the Inn and its future to be one of the greatest concerns of Village residents. This concern was reinforced by surveys undertaken as part of this planning project. It is clear that any revitalization of the downtown as a whole is largely limited by the state of the Inn. At the same time, the renovation and the reuse of the Inn could have tremendous positive benefits for the community and downtown.

The Sherburne Inn remains under private ownership. This limits the ability of local government, organizations, and citizens to impact its future. It is the community's belief, though, that waiting idly for "something" to happen will likely not result in a positive outcome for the building and, by extension, the downtown. Therefore, as part of this Downtown Strategic Plan, efforts were made to answer some of the most basic questions regarding the Inn, including its general physical condition, potential reuses, renovation costs, and other redevelopment issues, in the hope that the community can, in some way, positively influence the future of the structure.

As a first step in this process, Crawford and Stearns Preservation Architects and Planners were commissioned to complete a conditions survey on the building. This study included a general assessment of building conditions, reviewed relevant building codes, identified historic preservation concerns, and clarified issues regarding reuse options. Existing schematic floor plans, schematic reuse plans, and cost estimates were also provided. The complete report is included in Appendix 2. In summary, the report concludes that the building structure is sound and that it could probably support most uses proposed for it. Substantial renovations would be necessary for reuse. Minimal renovation of the first floor, including installation of a handicapped ramp, could cost as low as \$380,000, while a complete building renovation with installation of an elevator is in the range of \$2.3 million. These costs could vary significantly depending on the type of use proposed, the level of restoration undertaken, and the quality of interior finishes. The information contained in Crawford and Stearns report will be invaluable to prospective developers of the building.

In addition to building conditions, the market conditions surrounding potential reuses was also investigated. As part of the visioning and data gathering process for the Downtown Strategic Plan, the Advisory Committee brainstormed possible reuse options for the building. The Committee then narrowed down this list to three uses where they felt market information would be most beneficial. These were a restaurant/eatery, hotel rooms, and small shops. TDC then completed preliminary market research on these three uses. This research was not intended to serve as a formal market study for any use, but to provide basic market related data for potential reuses. It is perhaps most useful in determining uses that are likely not feasible, rather than confirming the economic feasibility of any one project. Of the three options, renovation the first floor of the building for a restaurant appears to be the most economically feasible option, while utilizing the building for small shops appears to be the most infeasible option. Combining the restaurant with hotel rooms increases the feasibility of both. The full market data report is included in Appendix 3.

## **SOUTHWEST QUADRANT REDEVELOPMENT**

The Sherburne Inn is located on the southwest corner of Route 12 and 80. The area surrounding the Inn is referred to herein as the Southwest Quadrant. It generally consists of the Inn, the Big M Supermarket, the Post Office, Chenango Pet Foods, Meeting Management Associates and several other buildings. One of the Village's primary public parking lots is also located here.

This area of the downtown has several problems. The parking areas are somewhat disjointed and confusing and traffic flow in and out of the area is difficult. The Post Office is located off the street behind other buildings, there is often insufficient parking to accommodate Post Office patrons. Furthermore, the site does not provide sufficient parking to support a significant reuse of the Inn. Cynthia Bickford Teter was hired to investigate the issues involving the Southwest Quadrant and to develop conceptual redevelopment plans that would improve the area both visually and functionally. Ms. Teter conducted a working design session with the Advisory Committee to fully identify issues, and to brainstorm redevelopment options. It is important to note that the Committee raised valid concerns that much of the property being discussed was under private ownership, and questioned how that should be incorporated into the planning process. It was determined that, since the redevelopment plans were conceptual in nature, the plans should reflect a "best-case scenario" regarding functional use of the site. Obviously, any future planning for the redevelopment of this site must take into account the needs and desires of individual private property owners. Ms. Teter's full report, including two redevelopment concepts, are included in Appendix 4.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The issues and problems involving the redevelopment of the Sherburne Inn and surrounding area are complex and interrelated. The recommendations below are based on the findings of the various activities detailed above, and are intended to provide the community guidance as it grapples with the problems of this area.

**Establish a Sherburne Inn “Task Force”** – The status of the Inn and its future is currently in a state of flux. The building could be sold, it could be foreclosed upon, it could go to tax auction, or it could remain in its current state. It is impossible to plan a single course of action that would take into account the various events that could transpire over the next few months or years. Barring fire or some unforeseen disaster, the only near certainty is that the structure will remain since the cost of acquisition and demolition far outweigh the value of the remaining land, which is only .3 acres. The most important thing that the Village/community can do is to remain involved in the project in order to keep current on the status of the building, and to influence actions relating to the Inn. It is recommended that the Mayor establish an ad hoc “task force” of 3-5 persons to be responsible for keeping abreast of issues related to the Inn, to support the long-term goal of a renovation and redevelopment, and to ensure that the community’s interests are considered in any actions related to the property.

As one their first actions, the Task Force should meet with County officials to clearly determine the status of the property in regard to tax and/or mortgage foreclosure, and the options the Village/community has regarding such foreclosure. The community’s concern and interest in the Inn should be clearly communicated to County leaders and staff and a collaborative working relationship should be established so that all are working towards a common goal. The Task Force should also have a meeting of existing mortgage and lien holders in order to ascertain the interests of each in the property, to communicate the community’s desires regarding the property, and to see if any agreement between the parties can further support redevelopment and reuse.

The community must understand that reuse and redevelopment may take a significant amount of time, and can be complicated and delayed by any number of factors, including foreclosures and bankruptcy. A dedicated group of individuals overseeing the situation, and proactively reacting to changes in the status, will help to ensure that, in the long run, the community’s interests are best represented.

**Support a Change of Ownership of the Inn** – The Inn is currently vacant, for sale, behind on loan payments to the Village (and perhaps other lenders), and reportedly several years in arrears on taxes. It is unlikely that the current owner will be able to undertake any significant renovation and reuse of the property and, therefore, a change in ownership will be necessary for any significant changes from the status quo to occur. There are a myriad of ways that an ownership change could occur, and each may have positive or negative consequences for the Village and community. The community, through the aforementioned Task Force, should work to ensure that 1) ownership change does occur, and 2) that such change benefits the building and the community. Issues involving various ownership change scenarios are detailed as following:

- *Foreclosure*- One of the existing mortgage holders may decide to foreclose on the property, particularly if they wish to prevent a tax sale. Such a foreclosure would not necessarily extinguish other mortgage, liens, or taxes owed. Since the Village is a lien holder, they may have to opportunity to influence the decisions or actions of the lien holder that forecloses. In the case of foreclosure, the Task Force should work as closely as possible with the new owner to ensure that their disposal of the property is undertaken in a manner that is beneficial to the community.
- *Tax Sale*- It appears very likely that, without intervention, that the property may undergo a tax foreclosure and auction as early as the spring of 2005. Such a sale may have both positive and negative consequences. A tax sale would extinguish all previous mortgages and liens on the property. However, the purchaser would only receive a quit claim deed, and obtaining a clear title necessary for future financing could be problematic. It also may be possible for the Village or related entity to assume ownership of the property prior to a public auction, if so desired. The acquisition cost from a tax sale would likely be only a small percentage of the current asking price. As aforementioned, discussions should be held with existing lien holders to ascertain their intentions regarding a tax sale, so that efforts can be taken to ensure a positive result. The negative potential consequence of the building being sold at public auction is that the property may be sold to an undesirable purchaser who does not have the knowledge or financial wherewithal to undertake a redevelopment project. This could result in half-hearted and misguided attempts at renovation or continuation of the status quo. Should the building be purchased by an outside party, the Task Force should immediately contact the purchaser to discuss the plans for the property and to provide the purchaser with information about the condition of the structure and the community's interest in redevelopment.

- *Public/NFP Acquisition* – Depending on the timing and outcome of any tax foreclosure and sale, the Village/community may wish to become more proactive in moving a redevelopment project forward and purchase the property themselves. Direct acquisition by the Village government is not recommended. If acquisition is the desired course, it is suggested that a new non-profit Local Development Corporation (LDC) be formed for the sole purpose of acquiring the property. This would relieve the Village and existing local non-profit organizations from liability, financial and otherwise, from the project. The organization would need to raise funds for both initial acquisition (either outright purchase or tax sale) in addition to carrying cost including, but not limited to, insurance and taxes. The LDC could undertake the renovation of the building for subsequent leasing or sale, or it could function as a holding company and market the building to a suitable developer. The latter is recommended since it would relieve the LDC of the significant difficulties of developing the property.

Should the LDC opt to act as a holding company until a suitable developer can be found, limited work on the building and site should still be undertaken to make the property more marketable. The building should be cleared of accumulated furnishings and materials on the first floor, and the structure should be made secure. Repair to the building envelope, including repair of failing bricks, should be undertaken to ensure that further deterioration does not occur. Lastly, efforts should be made to remove the demolition materials on the upper floors. This will likely require testing for asbestos prior to any work. Cost savings may be derived by using local DPW labor/equipment, labor from area correctional facilities, and/or other in-kind or donated labor.

The property should be aggressively and creatively marketed to potential developers. The County's economic development infrastructure could assist in this effort. In addition to local realtors, the property could be marketed through national venues, such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation's monthly magazine. High quality marketing materials should also be developed. Traditional marketing such as that done by a residential realtor will probably not yield the desired results. The materials prepared in support of this Strategic Plan could form the basis for marketing materials and information. It should be clear, however, that regardless of the marketing undertaken, locating a suitable developer could take a considerable amount of time, and the LDC should be prepared to retain ownership for a number of years.

- *Private Acquisition* – The direct acquisition of the property by a qualified and experienced developer would be the best option for the community. Aggressive efforts will likely need to be undertaken by the Village, Task Force, or other entity to entice a developer to the property. Depending on the outcome of the tax sale, the Village may want to secure a purchase option on the property. That would give them an ability to market the property at a firm price, and to guarantee that any development that occurs is in keeping with the community's desires. If the property is being marketed by a private owner, the Village/Task

Force should support those efforts, and remain in close contact with the owner to stay abreast of the current status.

**Support Development Efforts** – The redevelopment of the Sherburne Inn, when and if it is undertaken, will likely be completed by a private entity. The Village of Sherburne should work closely with the developer and support their redevelopment efforts. This can be done by working to streamline permitting and approval processes and by sponsoring and supporting funding applications.

There are a number of potential funding opportunities that could support the redevelopment effort, although some will be dependant on the ultimate use of the property. In some cases, funding applications will need to be sponsored directly by the Village, while others can be accessed by a private developer but will need local support. As potential developers are found, it should be made clear that the Village will work closely with them to put together an appropriate financing package. Potential funding sources for the project include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)* – The CDBG program provides funds for economic development projects that are creating jobs for low to moderate income persons. There is an open funding window, and municipalities can apply for up to \$7,500 per job created. There is a minimum request of \$100,000, not to exceed 25% of project cost. The program is administered by the New York State Governor’s Office for Small Cities, and is the same program that funded the development of this Strategic Plan. The Village can either grant or loan the CDBG funds to the developer. Due to prevailing wage requirements, it is often most suitable to utilize CDBG funds for purchase of equipment and furnishings, rather than construction costs. CDBG funds have been used for similar projects in the past. There may be other ways to utilize CDBG funds to assist the project, and these should be investigated when a potential project is proposed.
- *Historic Preservation Tax Credit* – The tax credit is available to private developers undertaking renovation projects on federally designated historic structures. The renovation must be in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings and all planned work must be approved by the New York State Historic Preservation Officer. This may alter the type of work that is proposed and add costs to the project. The renovation cost must exceed 50% of the basis value of the building. The developer is eligible for a tax credit with a value of up to 20% of the renovation cost of the structure. This tax credit can be used directly by the developer, or syndicated and sold to raise capital.
- *Low/Mod Housing Programs* – Redeveloping the Inn for housing, particularly housing for low to moderate income households, was not determined to be a desirable or needed reuse option for the Inn. Nevertheless, there are a number of State and federal programs that could provide substantial financing for such a project. If a developer cannot be located for other redevelopment options the Village should strongly consider supporting applications to fund

such a use, particularly if only the upper floors will be developed into housing with the main floor remaining commercial. While not ideal, such a use would be preferable to a vacant building or lot.

- *Village of Sherburne Miscellaneous Revenues* – The Village has already invested miscellaneous revenues into the Inn, and it appears as though that investment may be lost. The Village should, however, be willing to invest a prudent amount of funds in a major redevelopment project, subject to a thorough underwriting of the project. Funds may best be used as seed money that will leverage other sources. For instance, it may be better to use Village funds to cover costs associated with a funding application rather than directly financing hard construction costs.
- *New York State Housing Trust Fund Corporation/New York Main Street Program* – This is a new program, with only one funding round in the fall of 2004. Another funding round is expected in the spring of 2005, and the status of the program after that time is unknown. The program can provide 50/50 matching funds for façade and building renovation projects in downtown areas. The program also has a *Downtown Anchor* component that can provide up to \$100,000 per building, but not exceeding 25% of project cost, to help establish or expand cultural or business anchors that are identified in a local plan as key to a revitalization effort. The renovation of the Inn would be an ideal match for this program.
- *Legislative Member Items* – Member Items received through State and federal representatives are available on a case-by-case basis for locally important projects. Local leaders would need to work directly with State elected representatives at the time a project is proposed to determine what type and amounts of assistance may be available.
- *Chenango County* – The County and related quasi-public entities may also be able to provide assistance for a potential project. These may be in the form of industrial revenue bonds, or other smaller programs available to new, job-creating developments. The redevelopment of the Sherburne Inn will likely create a substantial number of jobs and investment, and the County's economic development resources should be brought in as a full partner with the Village in supporting the redevelopment effort.

**Relocate the Post Office** – The Post Office is a local gathering point, draws many people into the downtown on a daily basis, and is an asset that must be preserved in the downtown. The current location of the Post Office, however, is not ideal. There is limited parking, and traffic flow through, in, and around the lot is difficult. It is also hidden behind other buildings. The site assessment completed by Ms. Teter clearly shows that the building, while one of the best maintained in the area, is located in the middle of the site, is the only non-historic building on the site, and prohibits any meaningful redevelopment of the area. This includes the need to create additional parking for any planned reuse of the Inn. It is recommended that the Post Office be relocated to a new



location *in the downtown*, preferably as close to its current location as possible. The existing structure, including the structure connecting the Post Office to the Inn, should be removed to allow room for more, and more effective, parking.

It should be noted that this is a sensitive issue, and one that must be approached carefully. The current Post Office building is in private ownership and is leased to the Postal Service. The needs and desires of the current owners must be sensitively balanced with the need of the community as a whole. In addition, the Postal Service routinely vacates downtown areas for new buildings on the outskirts of town. Discussions regarding the need to relocate Postal facilities may prompt them to abandon the downtown altogether, which would be a loss for the community.

The Village, or a group of representatives, should first meet with the current owners of the Post Office building to discuss future plans, and to determine what will be needed (financially and otherwise) to meet their needs. Ultimately, this may result in the Village acquiring the building for future demolition and redevelopment of the site. Research should also be made into possible new locations in the downtown for the Post Office. The Postal Service has stringent guidelines for siting new buildings, and any new site should have, at a minimum, 1) parking, 2) handicapped accessibility, and 3) a loading dock that can accommodate tractor trailer access. There are several potential locations in the downtown including the former industrial building next to Chenango Pet Foods, the location of the current barn near the Big M parking lot, and commercial buildings on the north side of West State Street. Of these, the former industrial building (previously housing a used book store) would be the most advantageous to the community. It would retain the Post Office in the southwest quadrant of the Village and reuse an important local landmark. It would be more visible than the current Post Office and have more parking. Loading dock facilities could be accessed via the back of the building, and there appears to be sufficient space to install a handicapped ramp at the front. This building would be a significant departure from the types of buildings usually preferred by the Postal Service, and would likely be resisted by them. The Village may wish to hire an architect knowledgeable in Post Office design to create conceptual plans and cost estimates for siting the Post Office in the former bookstore (or other location as may be appropriate). These could be used to convince the Postal Service of the feasibility of the location. The Village should work with their congressman to reach a satisfactory resolution to the relocation issue.

For a number of reasons, the relocation of the Post Office and demolition of the building would be a positive development for the community. It would provide more parking in an area that desperately needs it, would connect the Village and Big M parking area and thus relieve traffic flow problems, and properly sited, would improve access to the Post Office. If the Sherburne Inn were to be redeveloped, additional parking would almost certainly be needed, and this can only be created through the relocation of the Post Office.

**Institute Other Physical Improvements** – The conceptual Southwest Quadrant redevelopment plans are bold and far-reaching, and will require significant private and public resources. The plans, included in Appendix 4, also include far more modest improvements that should be undertaken regardless of the larger effort. The Village and/or private entities should institute these improvements as money and time allow. These include, but are not limited to, removing and altering curb cuts into the parking areas, installing landscaping and streetscaping improvements, re-striping and improving the Big M parking area, and façade renovations to the Meeting Management Associates Building. The overall design of the project allows these improvements to be made without concern that they will be disturbed or destroyed in a larger redevelopment effort.

## VI. IMPLEMENTATION

Without a clear lead organization in the downtown, implementation of the activities contained herein could be stymied. In order for positive and proactive change to occur, and for the strategies and recommendations of this and other plans to be implemented, a framework for implementation must be established. A recommended framework is detailed in Benchmark 9.

Since the existing members of the Downtown Strategic Plan Advisory Committee are most familiar with the recommendations of the plan, and since they have demonstrated a high level of interest in the future of the downtown, it is recommended that interested members of this committee spearhead the implementation of initial projects identified for prioritization. This core of interested individuals should bring in other downtown stakeholders that could assist with initial activities. Representation from the Village of Sherburne and the Chamber of Commerce should be involved. The “Downtown Committee” should understand that it is not necessarily their responsibility to actually implement priority projects, but to ensure that identified project leaders implement the projects, until such time a more formal Downtown revitalization framework is in place.

The first task of this ad hoc committee is to determine which benchmarks should receive priority for implementation in the next 12 months. The chart in Appendix 2 shows a recommended timeframe for implanting benchmarks. These may be (and should be) adjusted based on real or perceived needs. At the outset, it is important to concentrate on activities that will (1) increase capacity to implement and coordinate projects and (2) be relatively easy to accomplish and have high visibility. Early successes are important in creating excitement for revitalization activities and for combating apathy among business and property owners.

The “clustering” of projects should be considered. For example, a formal announcement of revitalization efforts could be planned for the spring of 2004, at the same time new parking signs and visual improvements to the parking areas i.e. planting of trees, are completed (see Benchmark 1). The micro-grant and loan programs detailed in Benchmark 2 should be developed over the winter and their availability announced at this time. It may be desirable to have several applicants for these programs lined up prior to actually announcing them, so that new signs and facades can be installed shortly after the announcement, thus showing actual progress. Benchmark 8.1, including uniform hours and incentive programs for local employees, should be implemented to coincide with these projects as well.

In the early stages of the revitalization effort, it is important that the committee does not get bogged down with difficult to implement projects. If progress is not being made on a particular issues, it may need to be set-aside for the time being in order to accomplish other tasks. As progress is made, every success, no matter how small, should be celebrated publicly. Attempts should be made to highlight a success or a milestone on a monthly basis. Failures should be assessed to identify what did not work, and to identify what can be done to better address the issue in the future. Lastly, it should be understood by the community that downtown revitalization is an on-going commitment and is not something that is completed in five or ten years. Although past downtown revitalization efforts have had limited success, the Village of Sherburne and surrounding communities seems to be experiencing a groundswell of support and enthusiasm for creating a better future, and this bodes well for future downtown revitalization efforts.

**ARCHITECTURAL  
ASSESSMENT &  
REUSE RECOMMENDATIONS  
FOR THE**



**SHERBURNE INN**  
**SHERBURNE, NEW YORK**

**PREPARED FOR:**

THOMA DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS  
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## I. INTRODUCTION

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The Sherburne Inn (formerly also known as the Bullthistle Inn) is located at the southwest corner of Rt. 12 and Rt. 80 in the center of the village of Sherburne, Chenango County, New York. The building is a local landmark constructed during the early 20th century and has long served as an anchor in the community, but is currently vacant.

As one component of the Sherburne Downtown Strategic Plan this report provides a limited assessment of the building's current condition, schematic floor plans, a preliminary building code compliance review, a discussion of the historic aspects of the building to be considered as part of any reuse effort, and recommendations for a variety of reuse options.

These observations and recommendations are preliminary only and are based on a single site visit during which not all parts of the building were accessible for investigation. The intention of this report is to provide a starting point from which selected reuse options may be pursued in greater detail.

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## II. GENERAL BUILDING CONDITIONS

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### A. General Description and Circulation Patterns

1. The building is a three story structure with a full basement that projects above grade approximately three feet. The original "I-shaped" footprint has been modified somewhat by filling in porch areas at the front (east) and side (north) facades, and adding one story structures onto the rear.

At the southwest corner a concrete block addition extends westward and butts up against an adjacent building while another wood frame addition is located immediately at the rear of the inn. These additions appear to have been poorly constructed, were not accessible during the site visit, and have generally been disregarded by this report.

2. The principal entrance to the Inn is located at the eastern facade. A secondary entrance is located at the north facade and service entries are found at the rear and into the various additions.
3. At the interior the first floor consists of an irregularly shaped central lobby area surrounded by a variety of specific spaces used previously for meetings, toilet rooms, office, bar/restaurant, kitchen, a dining porch, and such.

The primary stair rises from the northwest corner of the lobby to the second and third floors above, as well as down to the basement. This stair has been nominally (and ineffectually) enclosed in the past to retain heat and/or provide protection against rising smoke in the event of a fire.



4. A second interior stair is located in the southwestern corner of the building and serves all four levels. The northwestern portion of the building appears to have been served by a metal fire escape once, the deteriorated remains of which survive in place. This fire escape has no historic significance and could be eliminated or replaced as necessary.
5. At the two upper floors the original floor plan consisted of a central corridor with rooms on either side. The corridor walls survive, but virtually all of the partitions that once separated the rooms from one another have been removed leaving long, rectangular open spaces.

## **B. General Construction**

The building is constructed with masonry walls (structural clay tile faced with brick on the exterior and plaster on the interior) on top of a concrete foundation wall. The interior floors and roof system are wood framed, as are some of interior partitions. At least one of the corridor walls is built of clay tile and the other is wood framed. Most of the original wood framed partitions that delineated the various guest rooms have been removed. The later rear additions have been constructed with light framing and concrete block, but were not investigated during the site visit.

## **C. Exterior Materials, Features, and Conditions**

### **1. Roofs & Roof Water Control:**

The main roof and the east porch roof are covered with an EPDM "rubber" membrane installed in the last ten years or so. This installation seems to have consisted of placing a fibrous recovery board over the previous roofing and then setting a rubber membrane on top of it. During the site visit several areas of the substrate felt spongy when walked on and it's possible that upon further examination a complete replacement will be recommended, but for the moment these roofs can be considered to be in fair to good condition.

In the course of this relatively recent re-roofing it appears that the original brick and wood balustraded roof parapet was removed from the perimeter of the building. This altered the integrity and appearance of the historic exterior significantly and restoration of the lost features is recommended.

Two brick chimneys, in fair to good condition, extend up through the main roof.

Both of the primary roofs surface drain to gutters installed at the eaves; the west facade for the main room and the east face for the east porch roof. No interior roof drains were noted. The existing gutters and leaders seem to

function effectively, but should be investigated more carefully as part of a comprehensive rehabilitation plan.

A relatively new hinged roof access hatch is located in the center section of the main roof and is accessed from the shallow attic space below.

2. Exterior Masonry:

The hard-fired, 20th century, fissured face red brick used on the exterior of the building is in fair to good condition and requires general repointing, especially where previous repairs failed to correct damage effectively or used mortar that did not match the historic material correctly. Keystones, coping stones, column plinths, and other features are a form siltstone that tends to be prone to deterioration and these would warrant careful repair.

In at least one area, the upper right corner of the center west facade, bricks are failing badly. It appears that the ties used to secure the headerless face bricks to the backup have failed, presumably due to roof water infiltration. This, and any similar areas identified during a more comprehensive investigation of the building, will require more extensive repairs.

Concrete areaways, steps, porch decks, and other related features, primarily associated with the west face of the building at the foundation level, exhibit various degrees of deterioration and will require compatible repairs.

3. Windows:

Most of the windows are wood, double hung units in combinations of 6/1 and 8/1 with a number of 6 light panels. Most windows are in good condition and appear to be original to the building.

4. Exterior Doors:

Some of the exterior doors are original wooden units and others are later replacements in fair to good condition.

5. Porches:

The exterior porches are distinctive features that are important to the overall appearance and character of the building. The ceilings are covered with beaded wood boards and failure was noted in a number of areas due, presumably, to previous roof leaks. The fluted wood columns are particularly important and, though some of the staves are separating, can be repaired.

At the northeast corner of the building the north porch was "extended" at some time, presumably to allow continuous protected circulation from the

porch on one side of the building to the porch on the other. This infill is inconsistent with the detailing and quality of the original porches and should either be replaced with a more compatible version or eliminated. The ceiling of this northeast infill consists of open framing rather than beaded boards.

The floors of the open porches are finished with concrete in a tile pattern and are cracked in a number of locations. The brick edging detail employed is vulnerable to weather damage and repairs will be necessary.

At the east face of the building the porch area just south of the main entrance has been enclosed with glass panels and doors, and the floor level has been raised up on wood framing to be even with the interior first floor level.

6. Rear Additions:

These additions were not accessible during the site visit and can't be described in detail. They are constructed variously of wood, concrete, and brick and are believed to contain the kitchen, storage, and related support facilities.

The concrete block section at the southwest is said to have been built as a banquet room with a separate exterior entrance facing north, but is not addressed by this report. The wood frame addition seems to be in fair to poor condition and may warrant removal, particularly if a new entrance is to be constructed at the rear face of the building as discussed under the section on reuse options.

**D. Interior Materials, Features, and Conditions**

1. Walls and Wall Finishes:

Some of the interior walls are load-bearing clay tile units while most of the others are light wood framed with wood or metal lath, and all are faced with smooth plaster.

2. Ceiling:

All original ceilings appear to have been plaster on lath (except for the basement where open framing is exposed and unprotected in nearly all areas). At the first floor suspended acoustic ceilings and other treatments have been installed in some locations, but can be easily removed. The upper floor plaster ceilings are damaged where various partitions have been demolished.

3. Flooring:

The original floors appear to have been a tongue & groove maple strip type and much of this may survive under later carpeting, sheet vinyl, and other

materials including the debris remaining from recent demolition work. Additional investigation would be necessary to determine the extent of salvageable flooring.

4. Trim:

Most interior trim is plain painted wood though little survives at the upper floors and there have been various additions and modifications utilizing later molding profiles at the first floor.

5. Doors:

The typical upper floor doors are a flat panel style with five horizontal panels and are only 32" wide with transoms above them. Many of these doors seem to have been removed and discarded. Surviving doors should be restored and reused, possibly at interior closets and other locations where passage is not necessary. New doors should match, but be slightly wider than the existing ones in order to provide acceptable access for the disabled.

6. Basement:

A substantial amount of miscellaneous materials ranging from stored items to general debris was found in the basement and should be cleared out for safety.

The ceiling of the boiler room consists of open framing with no protection against fire or smoke transmission.

7. First Floor:

The first floor is in the best condition of any part of the building, though it shows evidence of various remodelings over time and of disuse for a number of years. The two toilet rooms located at this level are relatively new and spacious. The bar to the north as well as the kitchen and other service spaces to the southwest were not accessible for inspection during the site visit.

8. Upper Floors:

As noted above, the two upper floors have been substantially stripped, removing nearly all of the original plaster, lath, trim, doors, plumbing fixtures, lights, heating systems, and other features including the partitions between rooms.

**E. Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing, and Life Safety Systems**

1. Heating System:

All traces of a heating system, other than a few radiators and small electric heaters, have been removed from the upper floors. A relatively new boiler (oil-fired, three zone) remains in the basement and seems to serve the first floor with hot water heat, but the system appears to be a mix of various modifications over time that shouldn't be considered efficient or safe. It's recommended that a complete new heating (and cooling) system be installed in the building, though it might be possible to reuse the existing boiler as part of this system.

2. Electrical System:

The current electrical system consists of a variety of components installed, modified, and altered at various times over the building's history. Some of the later work has used obtrusive wiremold and similar surface treatments. The electric service comes to the building overhead at the southeast corner then down and into the basement. The capacity of the service was not determined, but any responsible rehabilitation effort would include a complete new service and new switchgear, all new wiring, and all new fixtures and devices.

No significant historic light fixtures were noted. A few battery pack emergency lights, smoke detectors, and exit signs exist. It's recommended that the entire building be fitted with emergency lights and illuminated exit signs throughout. It's also recommended that a complete fire-and-smoke detection and alarm system be installed throughout the building.

3. Plumbing System:

Virtually all plumbing has been removed from the upper floors and that serving the first floor is a mixture of old and new dating from various periods in the building's life. Several small electric or oil-fired water heaters were noted in the basement. It's recommended that all plumbing in the building (including water, storm, and sanitary services) be replaced with new, though it might be possible to reuse one or more of the water heaters subject to a more thorough investigation of their condition.

4. Life Safety Systems:

Traces of a standpipe system survive in the building, but it doesn't appear to be functioning. It's recommended that the building be completely sprinkled, particularly if the upper floors are to be occupied.

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### III. HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONCERNS

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For the purposes of this report it will be assumed that the building has been or will be determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. This designation will be advantageous for reasons of code compliance in addition to the related economic and marketing benefits.

When State or Federal funds (and, in some instances, local funds) are expended affecting properties listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places various laws require that the funding recipient secure the approval of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to ensure that the property will not be adversely affected by this work. In New York the SHPO is the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

For a property not currently listed the applicant must first secure from the SHPO a "determination of eligibility." If the property is found to be "eligible" all regulatory review requirements apply as though the property were actually listed. If a property is determined not eligible then no preservation-related requirements apply.

A for-profit entity (including one with a not-for-profit as the general partner) rehabilitating an historic building has the option of taking specific federal investment tax credits for work executed in accordance with the requirements of the SHPO and the National Park Service. These credits, equal to the cash value of 20% of rehabilitation costs, can often be critical to the economic viability of a rehabilitation effort. [Interested parties should consult with qualified tax professionals to verify all tax-related issues.]

The SHPO's review in such matters applies to the interior, the exterior, the site, subsurface archeological concerns, and in some instances to adjacent properties where work (even if the adjacent property isn't considered "historic") might still affect the historic resource.

It should also be noted that there are no requirements that a project "restore" lost details or conditions, but rather that surviving features and character be carefully preserved. Lost details, etc., can be replicated, either exactly if their original appearance is known, or in a stylized manner that evokes the general appearance of the originals. The installation of false details, particularly in an effort to overly decorate an historic property, is also discouraged.

Failure to secure prior approval can result in the loss of public funding or tax credits if the completed work is considered inappropriate by the SHPO. It's incumbent on the property owner or their designated representative for the project to determine whether such a review is necessary since some funding entities may not be aware of its applicability in individual situations. In some instances it's advisable to have work not necessarily subject to these requirements reviewed anyway to ensure its appropriateness and demonstrate a willingness to comply with the intent as well as the letter of the law.

The SHPO (and National Park Service) review these projects based on The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (SOIS). These standards are more general in nature and are illustrated by Guidelines that help explain these concerns. In most instances, particularly when pursuing the rehabilitation tax credits, it's advisable to retain a preservation professional to develop project scopes and prepare the necessary paperwork in a manner that will be approvable by the reviewing agencies.

At the Sherburne Inn the following are some of the features and character-defining elements that will be considered significant, but a formal determination would be made by the SHPO at the appropriate time. Note also that features do not have to be original to be considered significant and many non-original conditions can be determined to have gained significance of their own over time.

- Overall building massing, primarily at the north and east facades, but also to a lesser extent at the west facade since it's very visible from the public street.
- The small additions to the rear as well as the porch infill at the northeast corner are non-historic. Their removal would be recommended, but not required. Any new additions to the building should be limited to the rear and should be designed to be compatible with, but distinguished from the historic building.
- Original windows, doors, trim, both inside and out. Windows can be a particularly sensitive issue and wholesale replacement is all but prohibited without substantial documented justification, but energy efficiency can be accommodated with repairs and the installation of interior or exterior storms.
- Interior features such as the original stairs (front and rear) are significant as are original materials such as framing, plaster, lath, and light fixtures to name a few. Not all such items must be retained, but any proposed removals must be justified and convenience, preference, and energy efficiency are not acceptable justification.
- The extensive demolition work undertaken in the building previously (especially at the upper floors and at the exterior roof parapet wall) would not have been approved, but would also not be counted against a new ownership entity. Replication of the parapet wall would be strongly recommended and new interior treatments will have to mimic the original plaster, doors, trim, and such effectively.
- Distinctive circulation routes are significant. For example, the hallway pattern at the second and third floors should be retained.
- Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems are not significant in the building and would not have to be retained, but new systems should be physically and visually compatible with the historic character of the building.

It's understood that modifications may be necessary to accommodate various building code requirements, prospective tenant needs, etc., but these cannot necessarily be done at the expense of historic significance and must be planned and detailed properly to be appropriate to the character of the building. These requirements do not, of themselves, cripple a rehabilitation project and every year thousands of historic buildings involving many millions of dollars are successfully renovated throughout the country in accordance with these same standards and guidelines.

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## IV. OPTIONS FOR REUSE

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The community planning process has identified several primary occupancies that would be considered desirable for this property. This section and the schematic floor plans included illustrate these possible uses relative to general planning and code compliance only. The economic feasibility of any reuse option is not addressed and would need to be carefully developed in conjunction with much more intensive planning and design for all uses.

### A. Special Concerns

#### 1. New Entrance

Since the most convenient parking for the building is likely to be to the west, a new entrance at the western face of the building has been recommended. The reuse options described below and illustrated by the various floor plans include very schematic (and modest) designs for this new entrance. The proposed entry additions do not include an enclosed ramp for access from grade up to the first floor, but the final version could if desired.

#### 2. Liquor License

Several of the possible reuse options would require a valid liquor license from the appropriate authorities to be able to serve beer, wine, and liquor. However, since the building is within 200 feet of a church it may be difficult to secure a new full service license and it's presumed that the previous one, which would have had grandfathered approval in this regard, has either expired or been revoked.

There does not seem to be an architectural solution to this problem and it's impractical to move either the church or the Sherburne Inn. It may be necessary for a prospective owner or tenant to secure the necessary approval through a variance process (if one exists), to procure a lesser license (perhaps just beer and wine), or to make alternative accommodations.

#### 3. Handicapped Access

All reuse options will have to address certain common conditions including handicapped access. The building is not presently accessible to the disabled. There are no means for persons with limited mobility to get from grade into the building, nor from the first floor to the upper or lower floor levels. None of the interior facilities are fully accessible (though the first floor toilet rooms come close) and no actual rooms survive at the upper floors to be considered with regard to accessibility.

The first floor level is approximately 37" above the present sidewalks; 32" to



the porch decks and another 5" step up from there. If a simple ramp were used for handicapped entry to the building it would have to be at least 37' long plus three landings (upper, lower, and intermediate) of not less than 5' each. A ramped entrance to the building would facilitate egress by the disabled in the event of an emergency and could be incorporated into a new entry addition at the rear. Alternatively, a platform lift could be used to raise the disabled from grade up to the first floor and would occupy a floor area of less than 5' x 5'.

One option for access to the first floor level would be to construct a 30' long ramp (rising 30") across the front of the sun porch on the east facade from grade up to the porch level adjacent to the front steps. An additional ramp and landings would have to be installed in front of the front doors to accommodate the 5" step at that location. All of this work should be designed and detailed, presumably of brick and concrete, to be compatible with the historic character of the building.

If an elevator were added to the building it would be possible to move the disabled from grade to the first floor as well as to other floors. If the disabled were to have access to the upper floors it might be necessary or at least advisable to construct an "area of rescue assistance" per applicable codes in which they could find safety during an emergency till rescue personnel can reach them.

It's recommended that access and accessible facilities be provided to all occupied portions of the building. For example, if the upper floors are not to be occupied it would be necessary to provide access to just the first floor. If retained, the current first floor toilet facilities are sufficiently accessible to be used with minor modifications. A variety of other modifications, including door widths and clearances for opening doors, would be necessary to make the rest of the first floor fully accessible in accordance with applicable standards.

If the upper floors are to be occupied the reconfigured rooms, regardless of their use, would have to be designed to provide access for the disabled. As noted above, this would include the installation of larger doors in key locations.

#### 4. Site Access & Parking

Currently the primary access to the building is at the east facade and a secondary entrance is located at the north facade. No effective off-street parking is available and a comprehensive reuse plan would include provisions for parking and, possibly, for a new entrance at the west side. Refer to other portions of the Downtown Strategic Plan for related discussion.

#### 5. Basement Use

All proposals would include rehabilitation of the basement for support space and storage, and these would require access. Any option with an elevator would include an elevator pit and machine room, and elevator access to the basement would be recommended. An option with a platform lift could provide access to the basement if designed properly.

6. Stairs & Exits

Both the main stair and the southwest stair are retained in all proposals, and by sprinklering and relocating the room entrances under each option to reduce dead-end exit distances the current fire escape would not be necessary.

A fire-rated, sprinkler-protected, all-glass enclosure is recommended for the main stair at the second and third floor levels in all instances to allow its architectural character to be enjoyed while providing an appropriate level of life safety. The southwest stair can be enclosed with a conventional fire-rated door and partition in addition to sprinklering.

6. Hazardous Materials

This consultant is not formally qualified to identify hazardous materials in any form and it's not known if any exist in the building or not. As part of a comprehensive reuse plan a hazardous materials consultant should be retained to undertake an appropriate assessment of building conditions.

**B. Options for Reuse: First Floor**

It would be possible to occupy just the first floor by providing a handicapped accessible route into the building from grade. Only one such entrance (and egress) would be required by building codes for this historic building.

1. First Floor Option A: Lift Only (See Dwg. 4)

Provide a new one story entry addition at the west side of the building as discussed above and include an interior platform lift to raise visitors from grade to the first floor and back down as necessary. Access to the basement level would be possible as described above.

The addition (+/- 450 square feet) should include an entry vestibule between two sets of doors to minimize cold air blowing into the building. Steps alongside the lift and a new hall into the lobby area are shown.

One of the current toilet rooms is shown to be reused and the other is to be relocated southward since the new entry hall passes through the current location. These facilities would be shared by all tenants on the first floor and

their patrons, though it would be possible for individual tenants to have their own facilities if desired (and affordable).

A common north-south hall providing access to these toilet rooms and to the tenant spaces at the southern part of the building is shown and connects with a lobby space, reduced to maximize tenant options, between the east entry porch and the main stairs.

This proposal allows approximately 3,060 square feet of rentable commercial space interconnected at the southern part of the building and another 1,096 square feet of space at the northern end that could be developed for a wide variety of uses including restaurant(s) with support kitchens, shops, and such.

Note that this proposal includes a large portion (480 square feet) of the original lobby space enclosed and included with the enclosed porch tenant space to maximize rentable area.

2. First Floor Option B: Elevator (See Dwg. 5)

This arrangement is similar to that of Option A, but uses a full elevator instead of a platform lift to provide handicapped access. In spite of greater cost, the advantages of an elevator are that it's quieter to operate, can accommodate more people and loads, and can serve the upper floors.

The elevator is shown in a new three story (except for the one story portion located west of the elevator shaft) addition. The elevator machine room would be located in the basement of the new addition.

An elevator addition could be used with a first floor tenant arrangement similar to Option A, but Option B illustrates the potential for using the upper stories for an inn or hotel and includes a desk and larger lobby space for this purpose. See drawings 6 and 7 for the proposed hotel/inn use of the upper stories.

The remaining first floor area retains the larger lobby and allows 3,548 square feet of rentable space for the same restaurants, shops, and such discussed above.

**C. Options for Reuse: Upper Floors**

1. Upper Floors Option C: Hotel/Inn Occupancy (See Dwgs. 6 and 7)

These drawings illustrate the option of dividing the upper floors into hotel or inn rooms with individual bathrooms. As shown, it would be possible to develop 10 rooms on each floor for a total of 20 which would range in size from about 230 square feet to 360 square feet. These are modest sized spaces

that could accommodate just one double bed comfortably and it might be preferable to provide a smaller number of larger units or even suites if a financial plan indicated an appropriate market.

The primary circulation pattern includes elevator access via a small hall connecting to the main halls. The original hallway pattern is retained to an extent usually acceptable to the State Historic Preservation Office. A room adjacent to the elevator in the new addition could be used for an Area of Refuge and/or support services such as ice machines and linen storage.

2. Upper Floors Option D: Office Occupancy (See Dwgs. 8 and 9)

The upper floors could be renovated for office occupancy as illustrated by drawings 8 and 9. This option includes the elevator addition with a lobby at each level that could serve as an Area of Refuge. The new space immediately north of the elevator would be developed for a men's toilet room on the 2nd floor and women's toilet room on the third floor.

The historic center hall circulation route would be retained, connecting the two existing stairs with access to the new elevator in between.

This arrangement offers up to 3,190 square feet of rentable space and up to 2,710 of it could be connected as a single tenancy if desired. (Note that the third floor areas are slightly larger than those at the second floor due to the shift in the main stair at that level.)

3. Upper Floors Option E: Apartments (See Dwgs. 10 and 11)

The upper floors could be renovated for apartments as illustrated by drawings 10 and 11. This option includes the elevator addition with a lobby at each level that could serve as an Area of Refuge. The new space immediately north of the elevator would be developed for laundries or related support use.

The historic center hall circulation route would be retained, connecting the two existing stairs with access to the new elevator in between.

This arrangement offers 5 one-bedroom apartments on the 2nd and 3rd floors for a total of 10 units. The apartments would range in size from approximately 470 square feet to 734 square feet. The smaller units, located at the west wall, would be 470 and 510 square feet respectively since the third floor areas are slightly larger than those at the second floor due to the shift in the main stair. With further study it might be possible to have a small den or even a second bedroom in the larger units, but at the expense of the living areas.

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## V. BUILDING CODE REVIEW

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## A. Applicable Codes

In general the rehabilitation of this building would be subject to compliance with the Building Code of New York (BCNY) and the related family of codes. The BCNY references ICC/ANSI A117.1 "Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities" for issues of handicapped access and the requirements of the federal Americans With Disabilities Act would also apply although local code officials are not empowered to enforce the latter.

Building code compliance is complicated by the fact that the actual proposed occupancy of the building is unknown and there very well may be more than one. The observations below assume possible occupancies identified in the course of meetings with the community and general project program planning.

This review addresses only the most basic of conditions and a much more comprehensive assessment would be required for particular uses once they have been identified and, as importantly, assigned to specific portions of the building. It appears, however, that any of the conceptual uses described can be accommodated in the building with appropriate provisions for life safety.

## B. Types of Occupancy

The following possible occupancies have been considered for this preliminary review and are described below as defined by the Building Code of New York:

- *Assembly (A-2)*: Assembly uses intended for food and/or drink consumption including, but not limited to Banquet Halls, Night Clubs, Restaurants, Taverns, and Bars.
- *Business (B)*: Office, professional or service-type transactions, including storage of records and accounts. This classification also includes a wide variety of uses such as banks, barber and beauty shops, post offices, and professional services such as attorneys, dentists, etc.
- *Mercantile (M)*: Display and sale of merchandise and stocks of goods or merchandise incidental to such purposes.
- *Residential (R-1)*: Residential occupancies where the occupants are primarily transient in nature including Boarding Houses and Hotels.
- *Residential (R-2)*: Residential occupancies containing sleeping units or more than two dwelling units where the occupants are primarily permanent in nature, including Apartment Houses.

Additional accessory or incidental uses such as storage and, possibly, a commercial kitchen for the above-noted occupancies are addressed in the code and would have

to be considered once a more specific reuse plan and occupancy type are identified.

### C. Code Review

As noted above, this report presumes a designation of historic significance for the building. Consequently, this code review begins at *Chapter K10 Historic Buildings* of the BCNY. The primary objectives of this section are to encourage the rehabilitation and reuse of historic buildings, to improve life safety, and to avoid damaging historic features or character.

Among many other points, *Chapter K10* requires (or allows) the following relative to the proposed reuse of this building, particularly if the previous occupancy, i.e. hotel and restaurant, is to be continued:

- *Report:* As part of a formal review process, a qualified design professional will be required to provide to the local code authorities a written report delineating existing conditions, particularly historic ones, how they relate to code compliance and life safety, and what provisions will be made to ensure a suitable level of safety.
- *Accessibility:* Buildings shall be made as handicapped accessible as possible without adversely affecting historic features. At least one accessible entrance shall be provided as well as access to primary functions and toilet facilities within the building at the accessible entry level.
- *Egress:* Even if they don't meet current new code requirements, existing door openings, corridors, and stairway widths shall be permitted to remain if deemed sufficiently safe by the local code official.
- *Compliance Alternative:* Subject to approval of the local code official a wide variety of conditions not consistent with new code requirements can be allowed to continue provided an automatic sprinkler system is installed throughout the building.

*Section K1003 Change of Occupancy* addresses requirements associated with new occupancies different from the previous use though these requirements are not materially different from the rest of *Chapter K10*. However, this section does refer back to other portions of the code including *Chapter K8 Change of Occupancy* and from there to *Chapter K7 Reconstruction* which result in additional concerns.

- *Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing Demands:* If the new occupancy results in greater demands on existing mechanical, electrical, or plumbing systems acceptable provisions must be made to accommodate the increased loads.
- *Hazard Classification:* The code places great value on relative hazards. As might be expected, if the proposed changes result in more hazardous conditions, including if the occupants are considered at greater risk, more

stringent provisions apply.

"Change of occupancy to an equal or lesser hazard" and "Change of occupancy to a higher hazard" are assessed against three Hazard Categories and Classifications tables (Life Safety and Exits, Heights and Areas, and Exposure of Exterior Walls) and if a proposed change is to "equal or lesser" in all three then the change is exempt from compliance with all but a very few of the requirements of *Chapter 8*.

A change from the previous A-2 to M occupancy does not meet the equal or lesser requirement for all three tables. A change from A-2 to R-1 or R-2 occupancy does. A change from A-2 to B occupancy does also. This means that a change to a mercantile use, i.e. shops, would involve more restrictive code requirements.

The minimum requirements for the changes that do satisfy all three tables include compliance with egress and combustibility of finishes in general, and with fire suppression systems and fire alarm systems for residential occupancies.

For residential occupancy in a project affecting at least 2/3 of the overall building area, a sprinkler system would be required for at least the residential portion (subject to adequate fire separation from other occupancies) if "an adequate water supply [is] available to the premises at the street". Similarly, an automatic fire detection and alarm system would be required for new residential occupancy affecting 2/3 of the building.

A change to a higher hazard requires a number of things such as enclosure of stairways, minimum sizes of operable windows for egress, dead-end corridor limitations, etc. , but some of these are superceded by *Chapter K10* due to the building's historic designation. Structural loading capacities are also a concern and would have to meet current requirements. Subject to testing of critical structural systems not included in this report, it might be necessary to reinforce the existing framing.

#### **D. Code Compliance Conclusions:**

In general, if reuse of this historic building includes full sprinklering, provisions for handicapped access, and general rehabilitation there should be little difficulty in meeting code requirements for the basic occupancy options described above.

However, to ensure appropriate levels of safety for the building, its occupants, and emergency personnel who might have to enter under difficult circumstances every effort should be made to comply with the more stringent current code requirements if this can be done without excessively compromising historic features or character.

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## VI. SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

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In general the building that once housed the Sherburne Inn (excluding the rear areas and particularly those that were not accessible during the site visit) appears to be in reasonably good condition and rehabilitation for reuse, whether using just the first floor and basement or the entire structure, should be feasible.

With proper planning and design, compliance with the applicable building code requirements and historic preservation concerns for the proposed uses would not be unreasonably restrictive. The success of any such endeavor would be more a function of the actual use of the building and the financial aspects of rehabilitation which would vary widely depending on which approach is taken.

In addition to providing an appealing character which should attract tenants and visitors, the building's historic status could be beneficial in securing funding not otherwise available for such projects. The ability to utilize all or part of the structure now, or to defer rehabilitation of the upper floors until a need can be identified, provides additional flexibility.

Additional study will be required to develop these reuse options further, to identify possible sources of funding, to prepare estimated construction budgets, to assess local and regional markets, and to determine the overall financial viability of the selected options.



**APPENDIX A**

**ESTIMATE OF POSSIBLE CONSTRUCTION COSTS**

All estimates are conceptual based on possible work scopes and anticipated field conditions. Actual costs may vary substantially depending on program needs and conditions to be identified as part of more comprehensive rehabilitation planning.

These estimates are based on approximate floor areas, year 2005 construction costs, and presume that the work will be carried out by a general contractor directly employing the specific workers. Small local contractors with limited overhead or owners performing some of the work by themselves might be able to complete a project for less. Using larger firms or contractors employing various subcontractors (where the contractor applies a profit and overhead charge on top of the ones already charged by the subcontractor) might result in higher construction costs.

No particular wage rates have been presumed for these estimates. Certain funding sources might mandate the payment of prevailing wage rates and other requirements such as a performance bond, multiple prime contracts, or the use of minority or women-owned businesses which could result in higher project costs. These estimates also do not include any specific provisions for the identification or abatement of hazardous materials should any exist in the building.

**A. Limited Exterior Repairs: \$69,000**

- Nominal repair and repainting of windows
- Nominal repair and painting of porches, trim
- Limited masonry repairs, sidewalks, areaways
- Miscellaneous metal railings
- General cleanup and removals
- Nominal repair and painting of rear additions
- Limited improvements to lawns and plantings
- Limited repairs to existing roof
- Miscellaneous work to be identified

**B. More Extensive Exterior Repairs: \$267,000**

- Repair windows to operable condition and paint
- Provide new exterior storm windows
- Masonry repairs and repointing, repairs to concrete walks and areaways
- Major repairs to and repainting of porches
- Wood & metal railings at porches, areaway stairs, ramps, etc.
- Remove fire escape
- General cleanup and removals
- Repairs to and repainting of rear additions
- Improvements to lawns and plantings
- Re-roofing all roofs
- Miscellaneous work to be identified

**C. Exterior Handicapped Access (East Facade): \$30,000**

**D. Reconstruct Historic Roof Parapets and Balustrades: \$115,000**

**E. Limited Renovation for First Floor Occupancy Only: \$172,000**

(Work addresses general cleanout, repairs, and upgrading in basement related to first floor occupancy and limited renovation of first floor without new rear entrance. Work at second and third floors addresses minimal cleanout and stabilization with fire and smoke detection

and alarms for protection, but not intended for occupancy.)

Basement: 4,500 sf @ \$6/sf =	27,000
First Floor: 5,930 sf @ \$20/sf =	118,600
Second Floor: 4,500 sf @ \$3/sf =	13,500
Third Floor: 4,500 sf @ \$3/sf =	<u>13,500</u>
Total:	\$172,600

**F. Comprehensive Renovation for First Floor Occupancy: \$378,700**

Basement: 4,500 sf @ \$6/sf =	27,000
First Floor: 5,930 sf @ \$40/sf =	237,200
New Rear Entry: 450 sf @ \$150/sf =	67,500
New Platform Lift:	20,000
Second Floor: 4,500 sf @ \$3/sf =	13,500
Third Floor: 4,500 sf @ \$3/sf =	<u>13,500</u>
Total:	\$378,700

**G. Enlarged New Accessible Rear Entrance with Multi-Story Elevator: \$78,500**

Enlarged Entrance: +250 sf @ \$150/sf =	37,500
Basement with Elevator Machine Room (in excess of base scope foundations, etc.):	
700 sf @ 30/sf =	21,000
Elevator (in addition to cost of lift) =	<u>20,000</u>
Total:	\$78,500

**H. Rehabilitation of Upper Floors for Office Occupancy: \$522,000**

Second Floor: 4,500 sf @ \$50/sf =	225,000
Rear addition: 300 sf @ 120/sf =	<u>36,000</u>
Total for Second Floor:	261,000
Third Floor (similar to second floor):	<u>261,000</u>
Total:	\$522,000

**I. Rehabilitation of Upper Floors for Hotel or Apartments: \$792,000**

(The cost of toilet facilities for 10 hotel rooms per floor has been assumed to be approximately equal to the cost of bathrooms and kitchens for 5 apartments per floor.)

Second Floor: 4,500 sf @ \$80/sf =	360,000
Rear addition: 300 sf @ 120/sf =	<u>36,000</u>
Total for Second Floor:	296,000
Third Floor (similar to second floor):	<u>396,000</u>
Total:	\$792,000

**SUMMARY OF POSSIBLE CONSTRUCTION COST OPTIONS**

Minimal Rehabilitation: The costs indicated are generally cumulative. For example, the minimum estimated cost to refurbish the exterior of the building (without handicapped access) and the first floor for use of just the first floor could be calculated as follows:

A. Limited Exterior Repairs:	69,000
C. Exterior H'cap Access @ East Facade:	30,000
E. Limited Renovation for First Floor Occupancy Only:	<u>172,600</u>
Total:	\$271,600

Comprehensive Rehabilitation: A more comprehensive rehabilitation of the entire building for use as a hotel or apartments with a new rear addition and elevator, with full handicapped access, with a new roof, and with replication of the missing ornamental roof parapets and balustrades could be calculated as follows:

B. More Extensive Exterior Repairs:	267,000
C. Exterior H'cap Access @ East Facade:	30,000
D. Parapets & Balustrades	115,000
F. Comprehensive Renovation for First Floor Occupancy	378,700
G. Enlarged New Accessible Rear Entrance with Multi-Story Elevator	78,500
I. Rehabilitation of Upper Floors for Hotel or Apartment Occupancy	<u>792,000</u>
Total:	\$1,661,200

### **SUMMARY OF POSSIBLE TOTAL PROJECT COSTS**

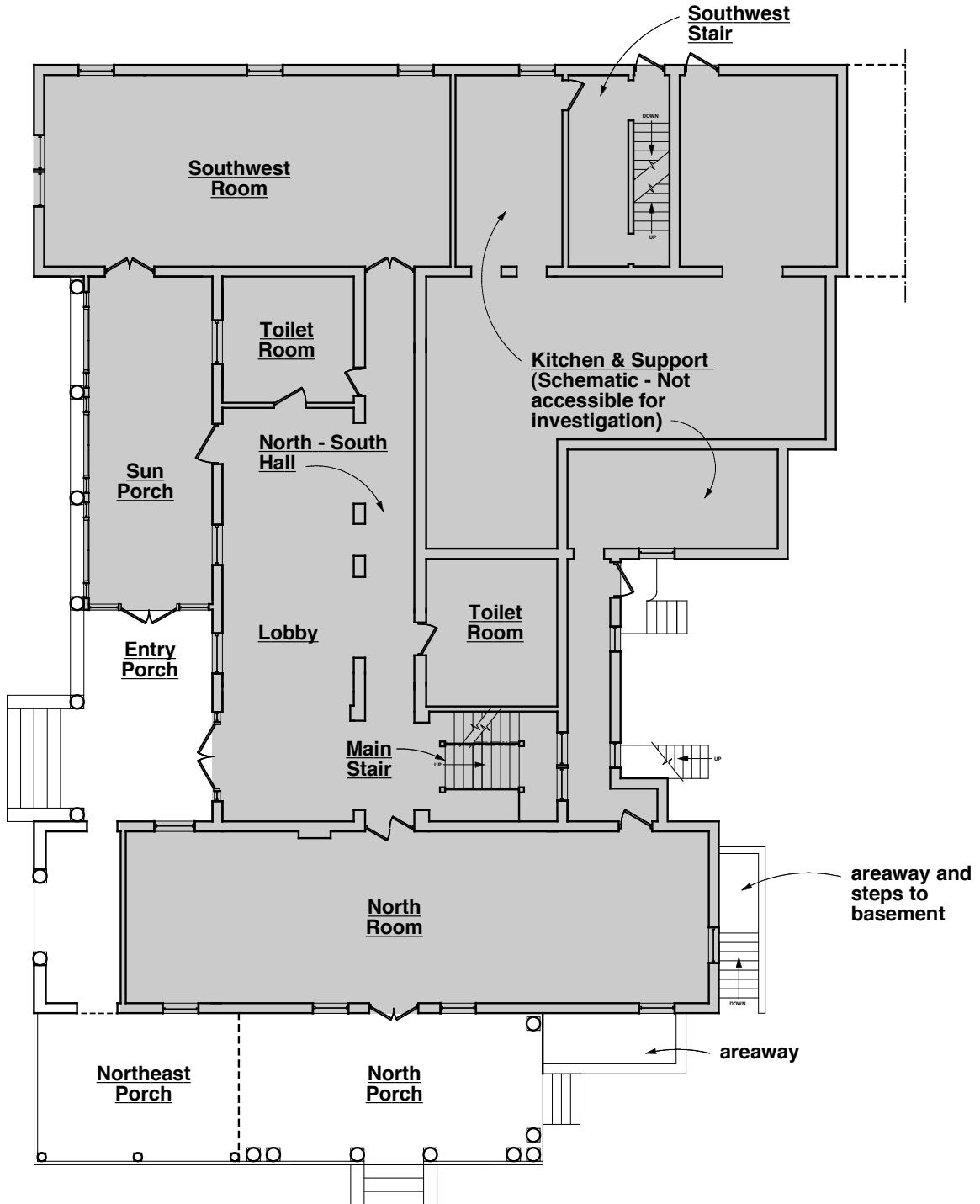
The actual cost of a project of this nature must include contingencies (both design and construction) in addition to base construction costs and soft costs such as architect and engineer fees, bidding and reproduction of bid documents, legal fees, and such.

These costs will vary, but for preliminary budgeting purposes it's recommended that a cumulative amount equal to 40% of the construction costs be allowed. For the options described adding these contingencies would result in budget project costs as follows:

<b>Minimal Rehabilitation:</b>	<b>\$271,600 + 40% =</b>	<b>\$380,240</b>
<b>Comprehensive Rehabilitation:</b>	<b>\$1,661,200 + 40% =</b>	<b>\$2,325,680</b>

### **CONCLUSION**

Recognizing the differences between various types and degrees of occupancy, and allowing for the possible economies of some work being done directly by an owner or tenant and, at the other extreme, of inflation or other unexpected factors (including the possible presence of hazardous materials) that would significantly increase rehabilitation costs it should be possible to renovate this building, or portions of this building, within a project budget ranging from approximately \$300,000 to \$3,000,000.



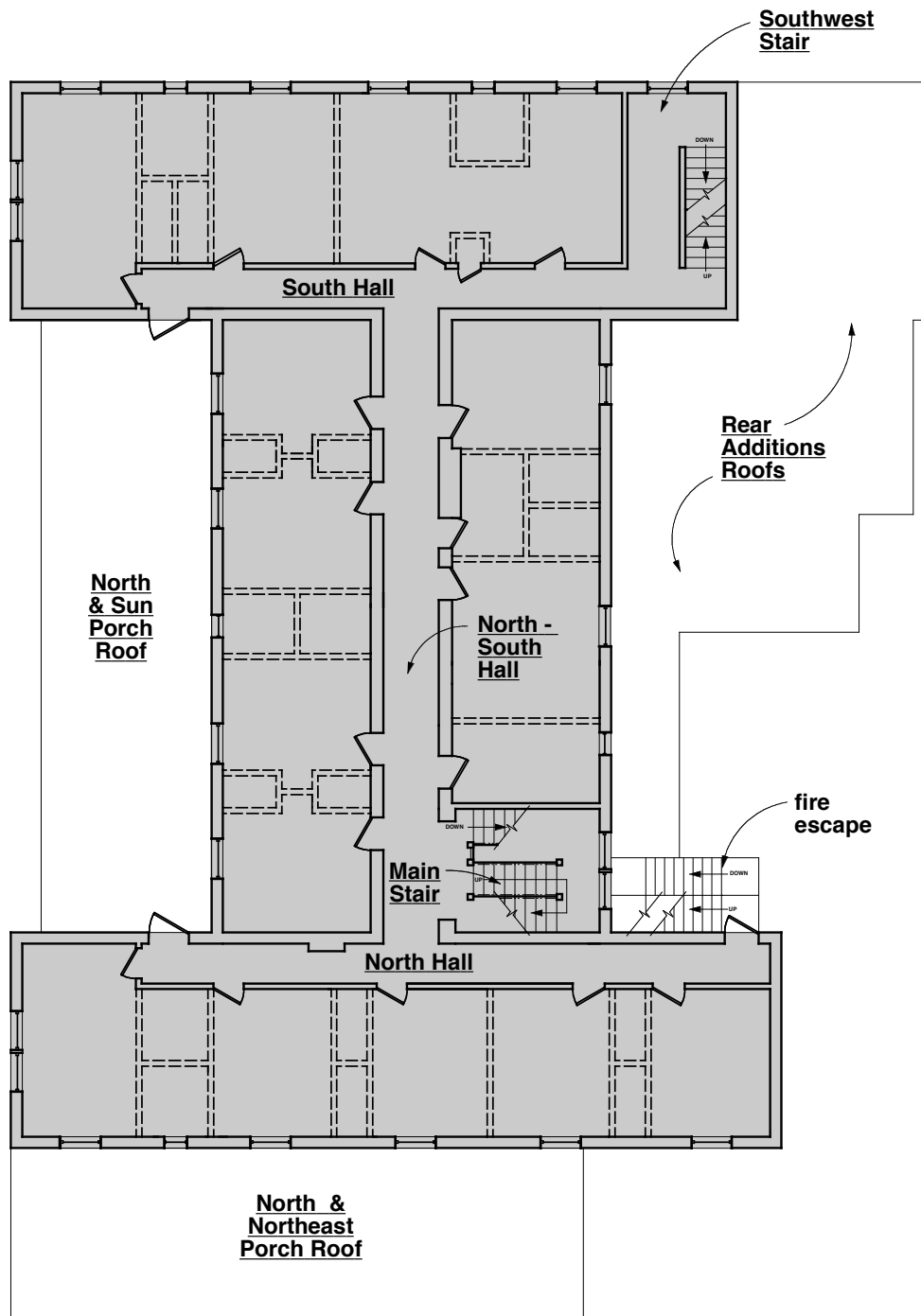
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**EXISTING CONDITION 1ST FLOOR PLAN @ THE SHERBURNE INN / SHERBURNE, NY**

CRAWFORD & STEARNS / ARCHITECTS AND PRESERVATION PLANNERS / 134 WALTON STREET / SYRACUSE, NY 13202  
 JANUARY 15, 2005 SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"



NORTH



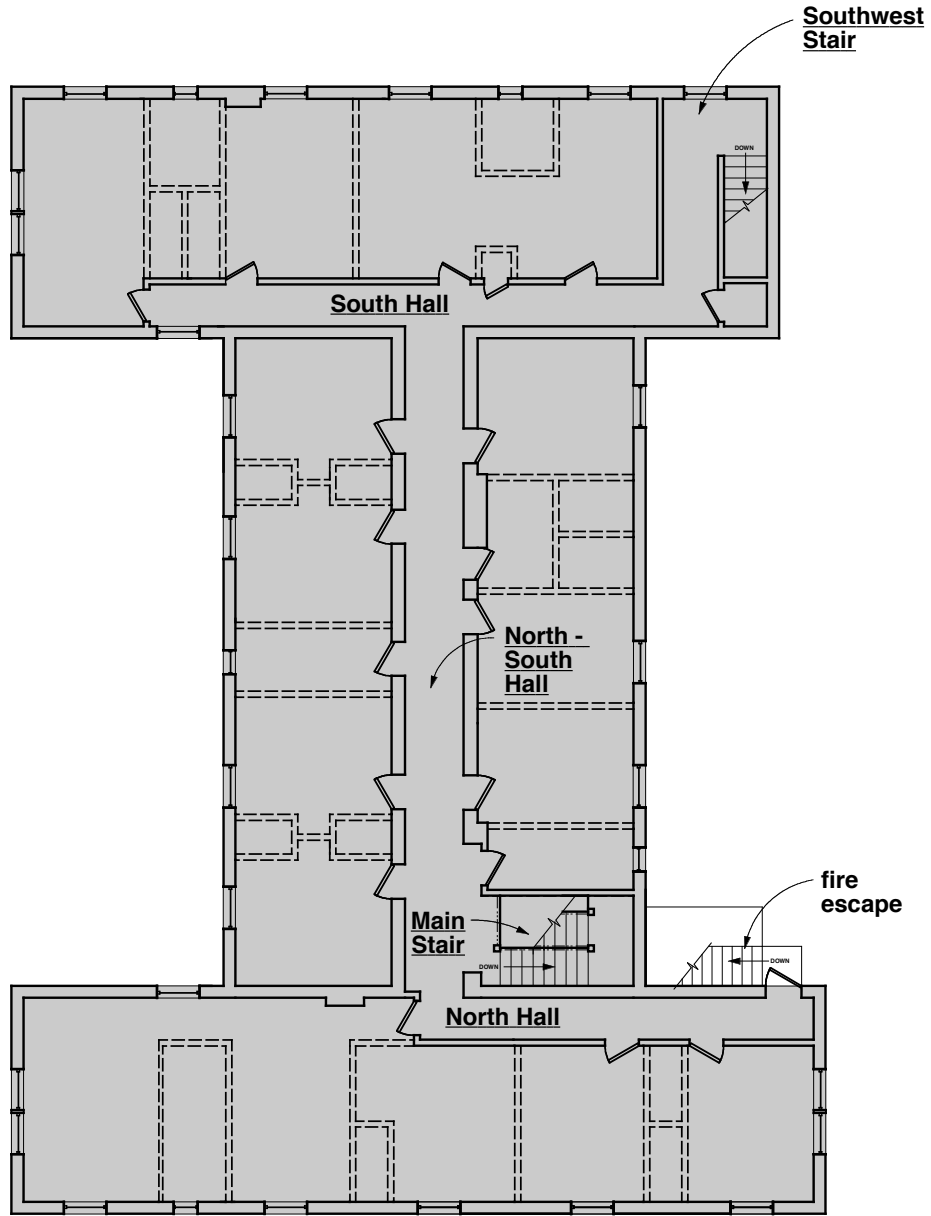
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**EXISTING CONDITION 2ND FLOOR PLAN @ THE SHERBURNE INN / SHERBURNE, NY**

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 JANUARY 15, 2005 SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"



NORTH



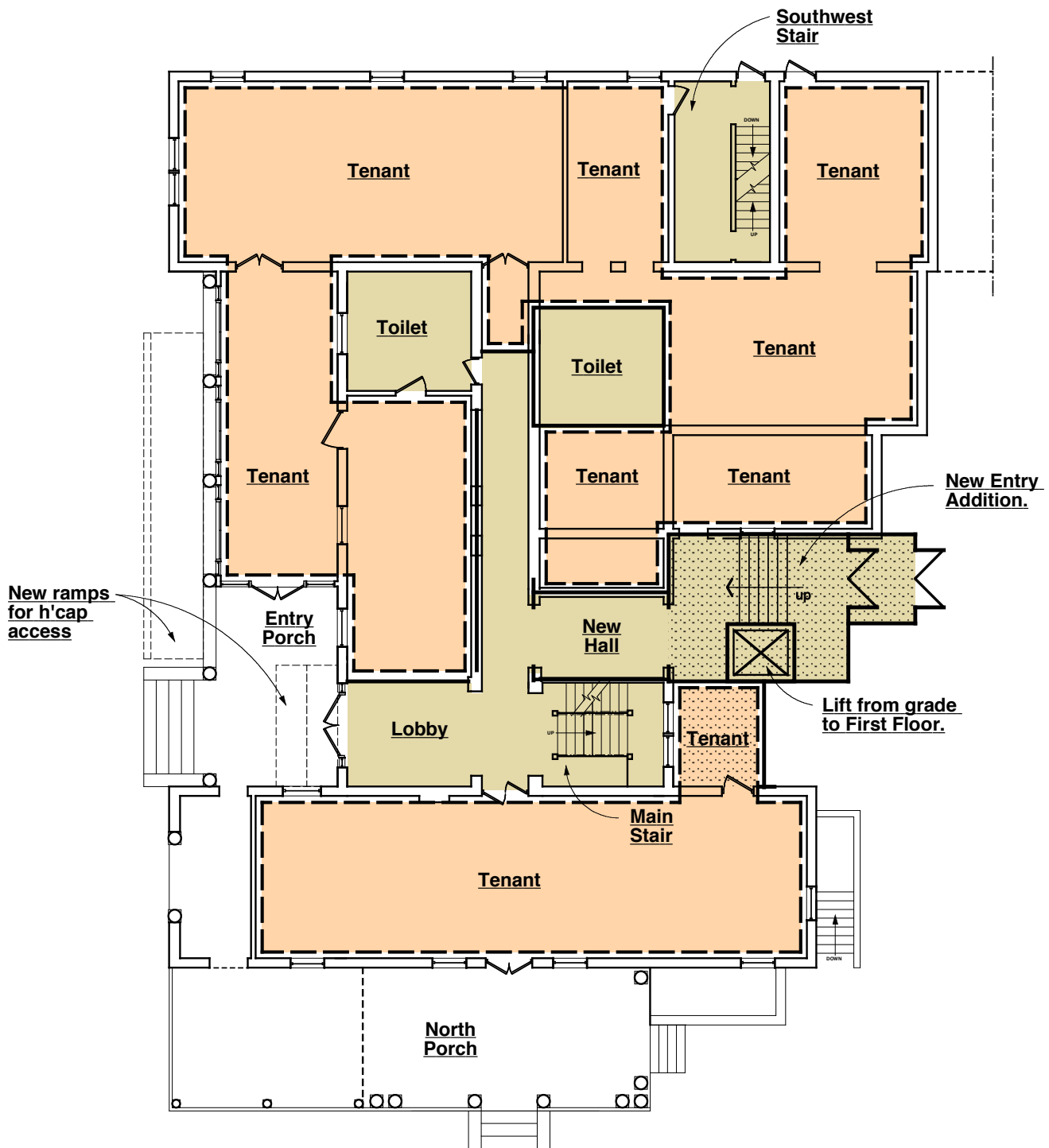
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**EXISTING CONDITION 3RD FLOOR PLAN @ THE SHERBURNE INN / SHERBURNE, NY**

CRAWFORD & STEARNS / ARCHITECTS AND PRESERVATION PLANNERS / 134 WALTON STREET / SYRACUSE, NY 13202  
 JANUARY 15, 2005 SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"



NORTH



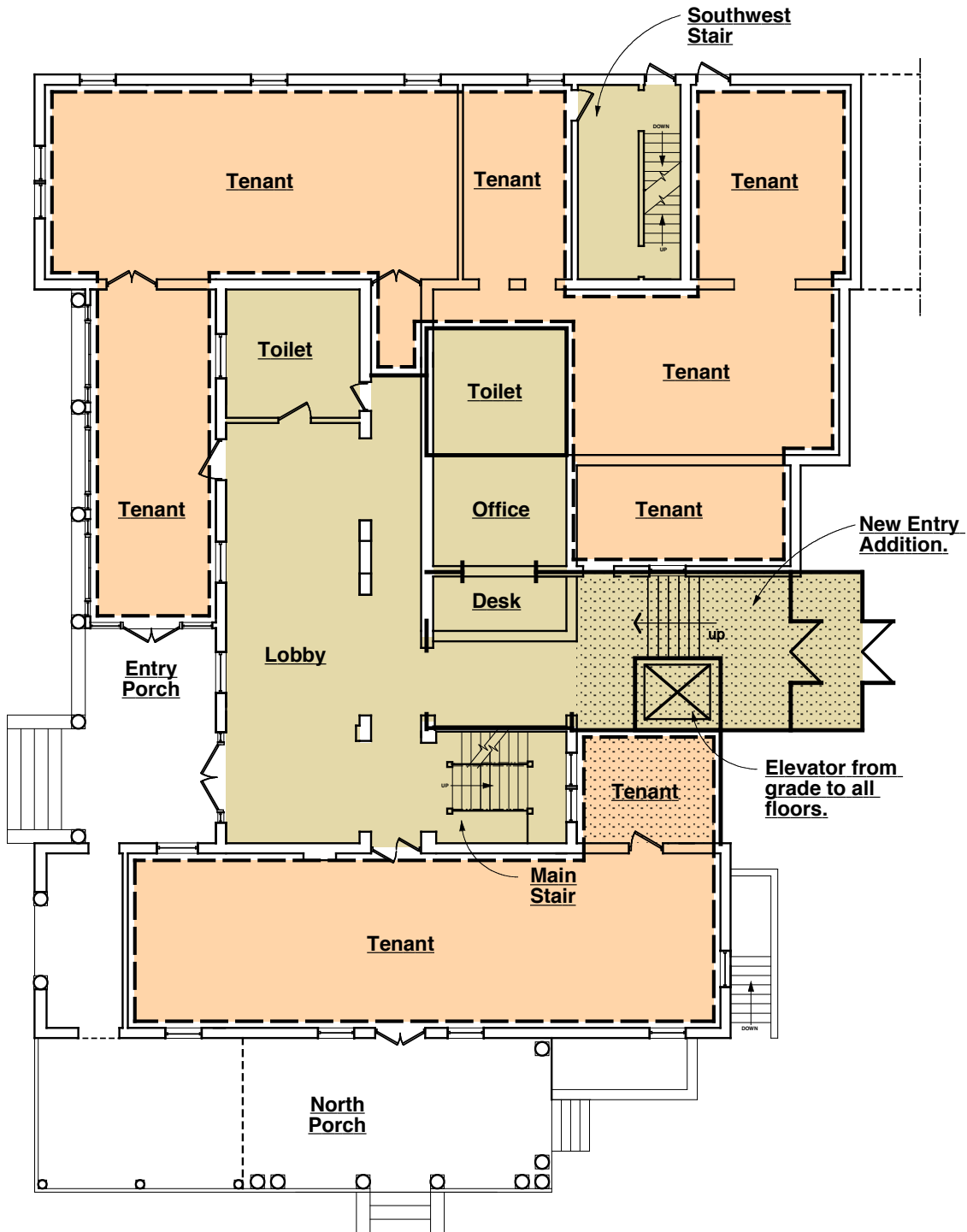
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**FIRST FLOOR OPTION WITH LIFT  
1ST FLOOR PLAN @ THE SHERBURNE INN / SHERBURNE, NY**

CRAWFORD & STEARNS / ARCHITECTS AND PRESERVATION PLANNERS / 134 WALTON STREET / SYRACUSE, NY 13202  
 JANUARY 15, 2005 SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"



NORTH



# 5

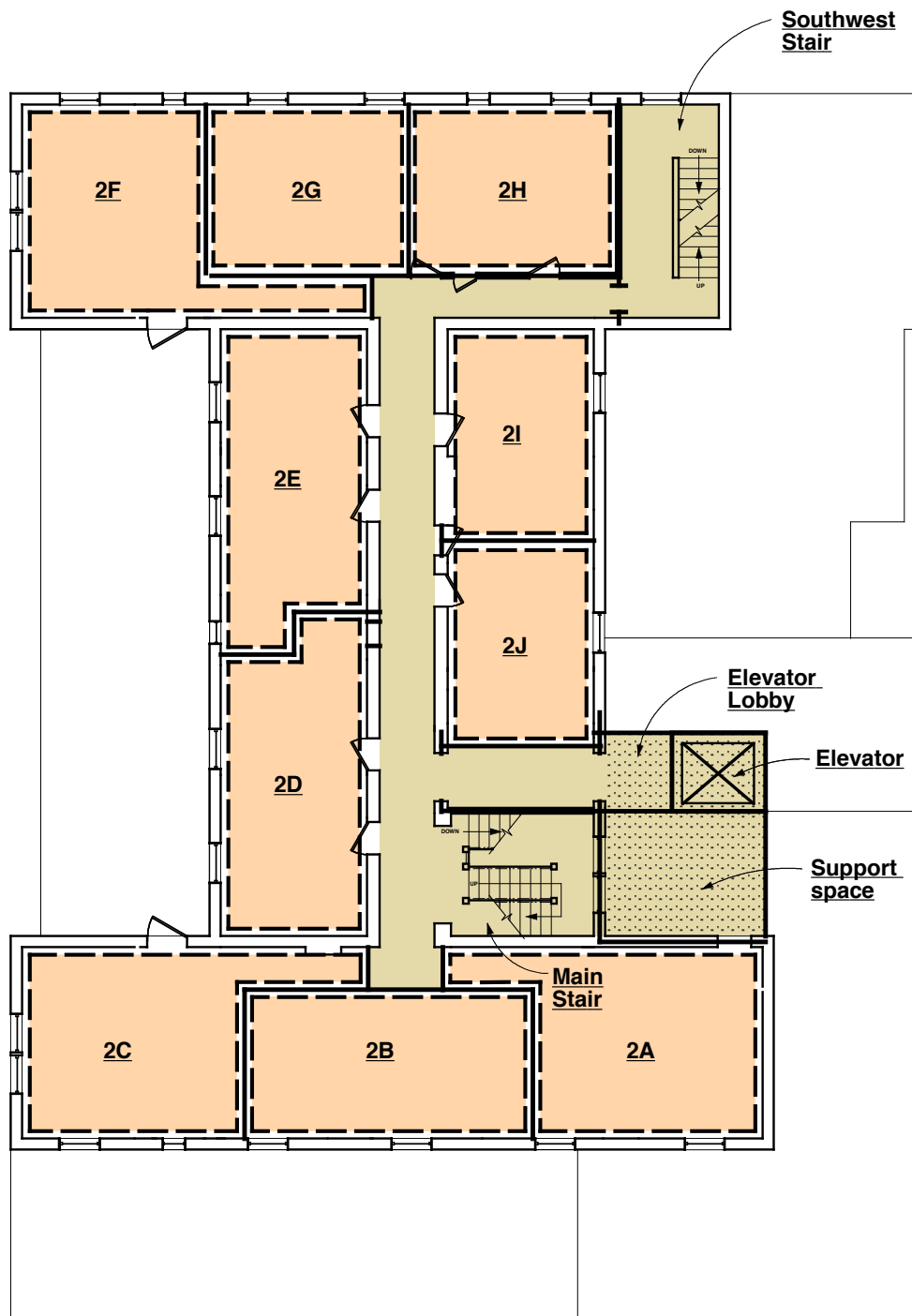
## FIRST FLOOR OPTION WITH ELEVATOR 1ST FLOOR PLAN @ THE SHERBURNE INN / SHERBURNE, NY

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JANUARY 15, 2005 SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"



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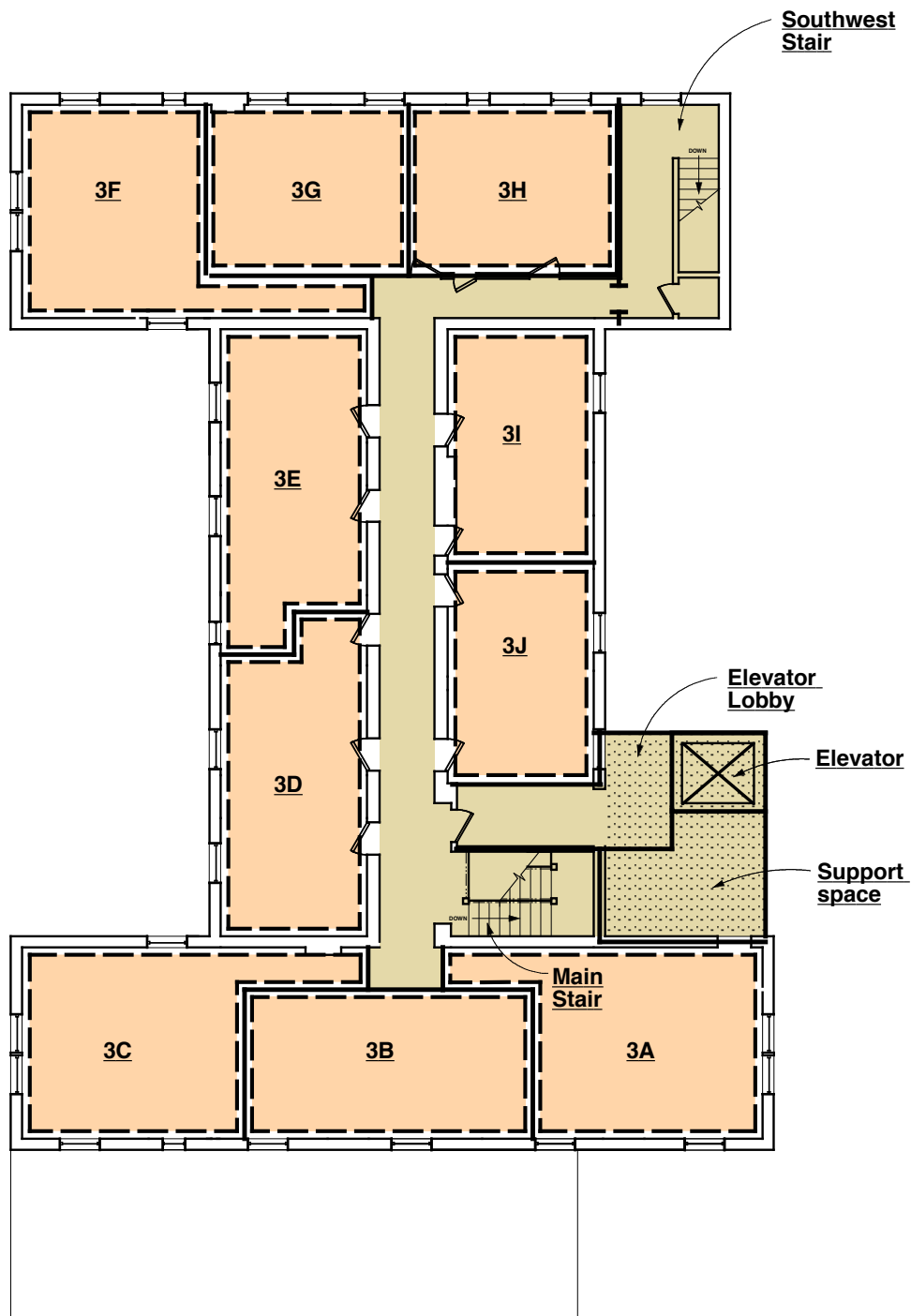
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**HOTEL / INN OCCUPANCY  
2ND FLOOR PLAN @ THE SHERBURNE INN / SHERBURNE, NY**

CRAWFORD & STEARNS / ARCHITECTS AND PRESERVATION PLANNERS / 134 WALTON STREET / SYRACUSE, NY 13202  
JANUARY 15, 2005 SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"



NORTH



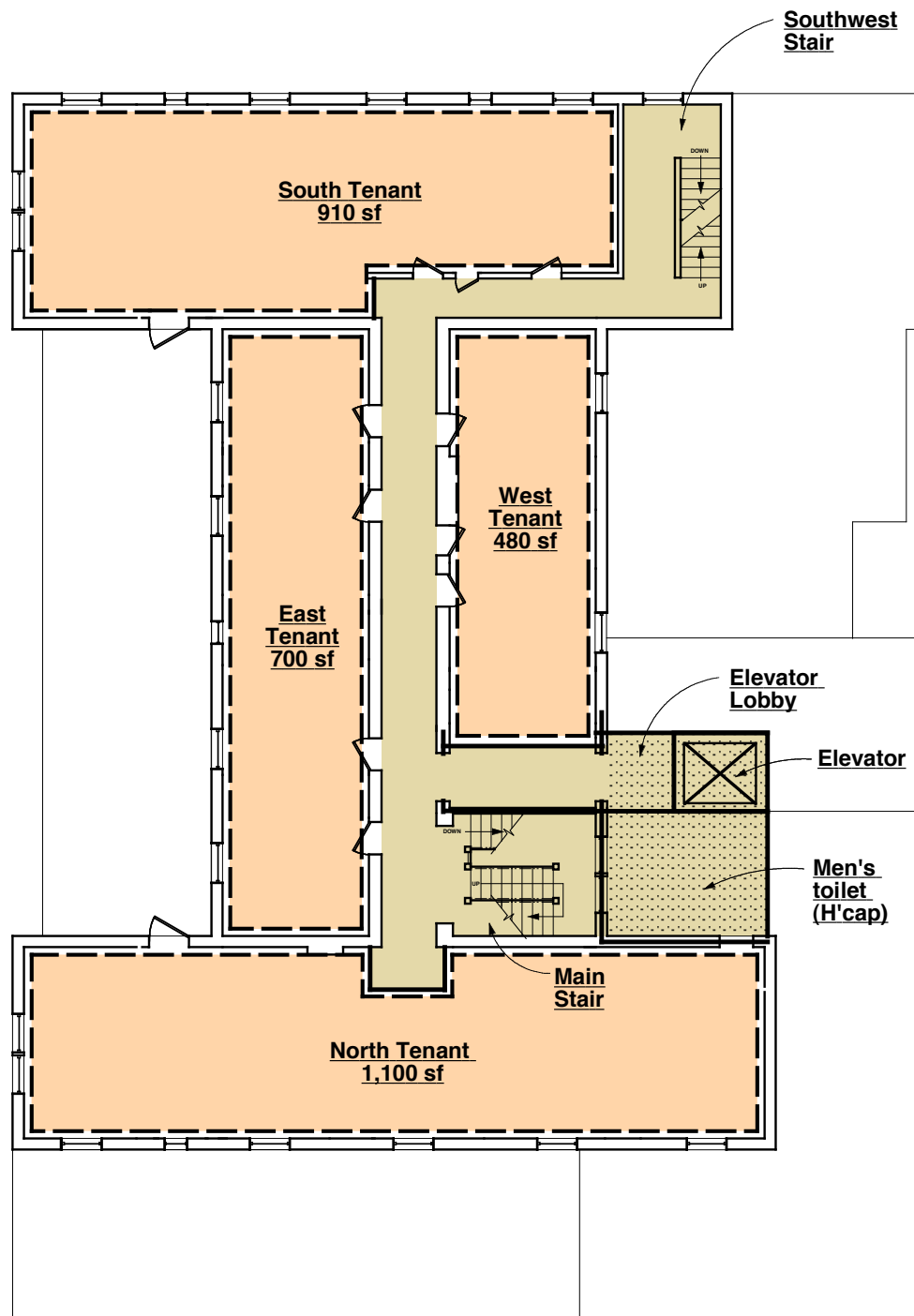
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**HOTEL / INN OCCUPANCY  
3RD FLOOR PLAN @ THE SHERBURNE INN / SHERBURNE, NY**

CRAWFORD & STEARNS / ARCHITECTS AND PRESERVATION PLANNERS / 134 WALTON STREET / SYRACUSE, NY 13202  
JANUARY 15, 2004 SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"



NORTH



Note: Total rental area = 3,190 sf.

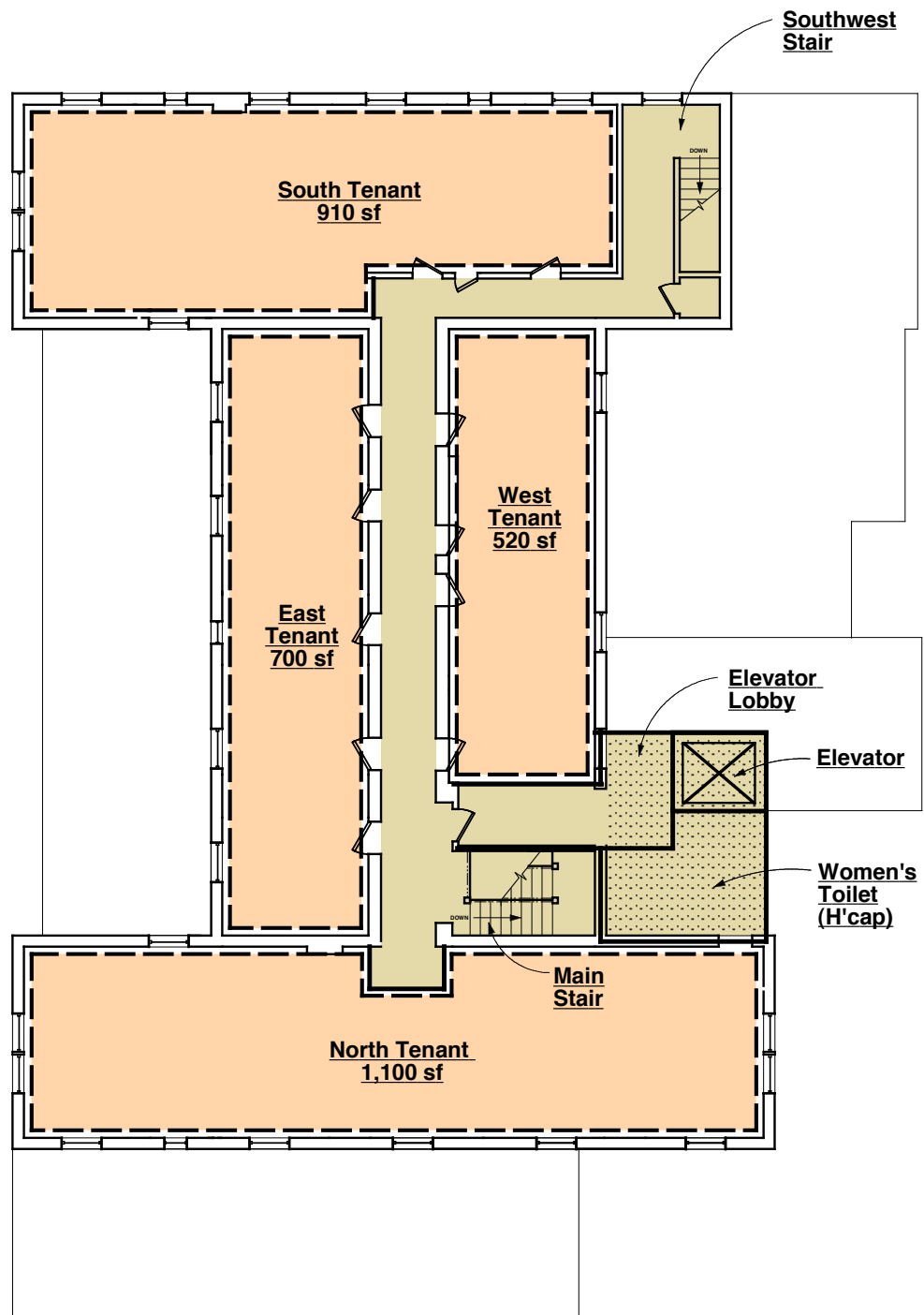
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## OFFICE OCCUPANCY 2ND FLOOR PLAN @ THE SHERBURNE INN / SHERBURNE, NY

CRAWFORD & STEARNS / ARCHITECTS AND PRESERVATION PLANNERS / 134 WALTON STREET / SYRACUSE, NY 13202  
JANUARY 15, 2005 SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"



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Note: Total rental area = 2,950 sf.

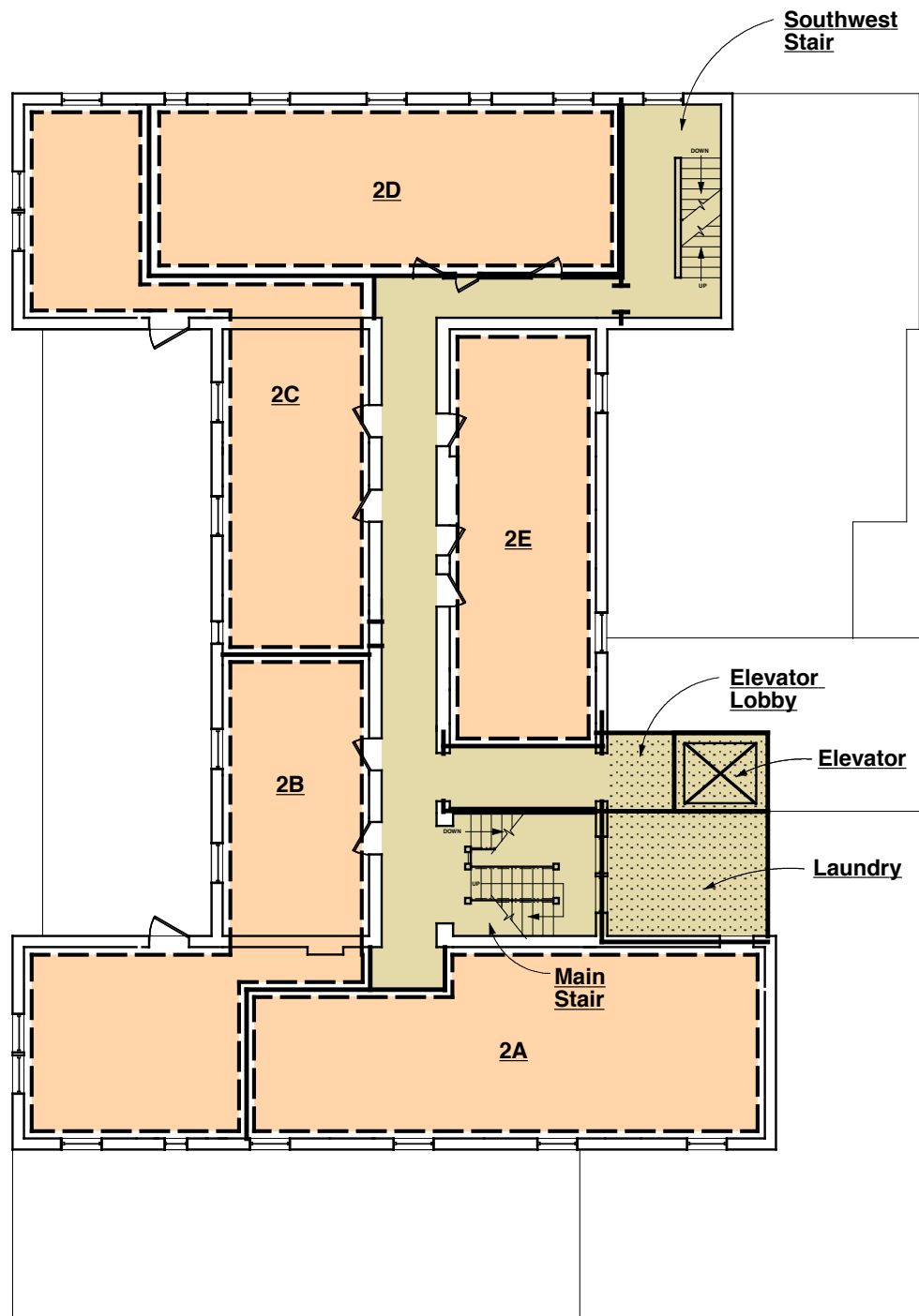
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## OFFICE OCCUPANCY 3RD FLOOR PLAN @ THE SHERBURNE INN / SHERBURNE, NY

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JANUARY 15, 2005 SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"



NORTH



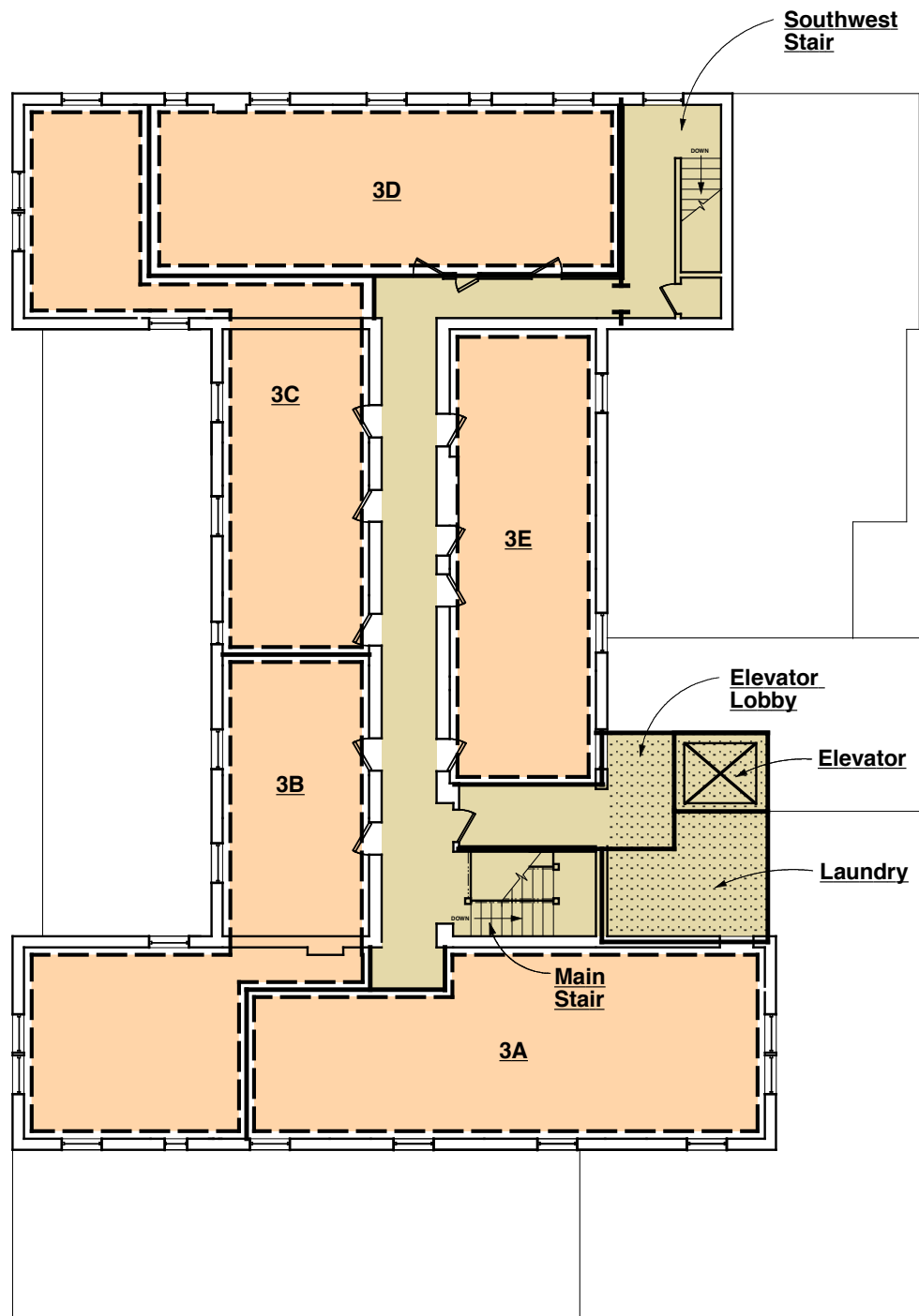
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**APARTMENT OCCUPANCY  
2ND FLOOR PLAN @ THE SHERBURNE INN / SHERBURNE, NY**

CRAWFORD & STEARNS / ARCHITECTS AND PRESERVATION PLANNERS / 134 WALTON STREET / SYRACUSE, NY 13202  
JANUARY 15, 2005 SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"



NORTH



11

**APARTMENT OCCUPANCY  
3RD FLOOR PLAN @ THE SHERBURNE INN / SHERBURNE, NY**

CRAWFORD & STEARNS / ARCHITECTS AND PRESERVATION PLANNERS / 134 WALTON STREET / SYRACUSE, NY 13202  
JANUARY 15, 2005 SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"



NORTH

Sherburne Inn

MARKET  
ANALYSIS

JANUARY 2005

# INTRODUCTION

As identified in the RFP for this project, TDC will undertake a preliminary market assessment of 2-3 potential reuses of the Sherburne Inn. This market research will only be a preliminary, general investigation to determine if sufficient potential exists to support further in-depth investigation. Certainly prior to any private or public investment into the Sherburne Inn, a more detailed analysis must be undertaken. Working with the Steering Committee for this project, approximately fifteen uses were identified as potential uses of the Inn. After further discussion, those uses were narrowed to three for further study. Uses to be studied include: full service restaurant, a hotel/inn, and small shops. A number of assumptions are made without supporting information.

Prior to considering each of the above uses some basic information concerning the market area is important to review.

## Basic Demographic Information

In undertaking the preliminary market assessment, it was determined that two market areas exist. The first market area is a fifteen mile radius from the intersections of Route 12 and Route 80. The second market area is a twenty-five mile radius from the same location. It is understood, however, that it is likely that a high percentage of any users for a renovated Sherburne Inn will likely come from outside both of these market areas, especially when considering the hotel/inn option. Listed following are two tables that demonstrate the population and number of households included in each of the market areas:

### POPULATION

<u>Year</u>	<u>15 Miles</u>	<u>25 Miles</u>
1990 Census	43,634	103,758
2000 Census	43,156	105,075
2004 Estimate	43,156	105,626
2009 Projected	43,176	106,178

### NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS

<u>Year</u>	<u>15 Miles</u>	<u>25 Miles</u>
1990 Census	15,404	36,083
2000 Census	15,832	38,689
2004 Estimate	15,995	39,362
2009 Projected	16,211	40,162

Source: U.S. Census and Claritas, Inc. data



As can be seen from the above tables, an insignificant population growth is being projected over the next five years for both market areas (.04% for the fifteen mile radius, .5% for the twenty-five mile radius). Due to projected smaller household sizes, however, there is some limited growth in the number of projected households by the year 2009.

## **Traffic Counts**

The heart of Sherburne's downtown area is the intersection of Route 12 and Route 80. Route 12 is the major north/south route through Chenango County. Route 12 is also the most direct link between the larger cities of Utica and Binghamton. Route 80 runs east/west in the northern section of Chenango County. It is a very indirect route that links the Syracuse area to Cooperstown, though this would not likely be the preferred route of travel (see map).

Traffic Counts are maintained by the New York State Department of Transportation as annual average daily traffic (AADT), a total daily volume of traffic in both directions on a specific section of highway. For Route 12 in the Village of Sherburne (from Route 80 north to the intersection of Route 12b, a distance of .75 miles) the AADT is 9,231. With the exception of the AADT counts on Route 12 in and around the City of Norwich, this is the highest traffic count of any segment of any road in Chenango County. For Route 80 to the west (County Route 23 to the intersection of Route 12, a distance of .71 miles), the registers AADT count is 2,786. Route 80 to the east (intersection of Route 12 to County Route 25, of distance of 6.7 miles) registers a AADT of 1,626. This traffic data reveals that downtown Sherburne's main intersection has a significant amount of traffic flow each day. Even allowing for some vehicles being counted more than once, the traffic likely approaches 10,000 cars per day at that location.

## **Attractions in the Market Areas**

Within the fifteen mile market area radius of the Village of Sherburne, the main population centers include the City of Norwich, the Villages of Sherburne and New Berlin. Attractions in this radius include, Colgate University, which is by far the largest attraction; the Roger Center in Sherburne; and the Earlville Opera House, as well as some museums and other attractions in the City of Norwich. Expanding to the twenty-five mile market area radius adds the Villages of Cazenovia, Morrisville, and Oxford, and attractions such as Cazenovia College, SUNY Morrisville, and the numerous antique shops on Route 20. Just outside this twenty-five mile radius, some nearby attractions include the Turning Stone Casino, Hamilton College, the Village of Cooperstown and its museums, and the City of Oneonta, which includes two colleges and several other large attractions.

## **MARKET FOR A RESTAURANT**

The last economic use of the Sherburne Inn was as a restaurant and tavern on the first floor. One of the needs identified by the Village Steering Committee was for a full service restaurant in the Village. The use as a restaurant on the first floor likely will provide a lower capital cost since upper floor renovation is not needed. The total exterior, however, would have to be renovated and a more available parking situation would have to be developed, either by the restaurant on private property or through the use of public parking areas. Apparently some of the kitchen equipment remains, however, it is not known whether a new owner could use it.

### **Competition**

Within the fifteen mile radius, 37 restaurants were identified. The majority of these restaurants were located in Norwich to the south. Thirteen of those restaurants are classified as full service restaurants, meaning they provide both lunch and dinner and not fast food.

### **Consumer Spending**

In 2004 the households within the fifteen mile radius expended over \$60 million on food away from home. An additional \$4.6 million was spent on alcoholic beverages consumed away from home. With only 37 restaurants identified in the radius, it is likely that a large percentage of this spending occurred in restaurants outside the area. The households spending on food in this radius is projected to increase by over 16% by 2009. There is likely a demand in the area to be captured. The large number of travelers coming to or passing through the Sherburne area will also provide some demand that is available to be captured.

### **Projected Financial Results**

The potential revenues from a restaurant will come from two sources: dining and events. A third source, guests, will be present if hotel rooms are built on the upper floors of the Inn. It is almost impossible to project the potential revenues of a known restaurant, let alone an unknown new entity. However, detailed below are some very primarily preliminary projections based upon some significant assumptions.

*Dining* - Assumptions: A dinner, including food and beverage, has an average cost of \$21 and lunch, including food and beverage, has an average cost of \$11. For both dinner and lunch, assume 15 patrons per day for six days a week. These assumptions project revenues of \$149,760. A reasonable estimate for labor, food, and other operating cost is 70%. A deduction of 70% yields \$44,928 in gross operating profit.

*Events* - The Sherburne Inn will likely host events, banquets, etc. Due to the limited space, an average of 25 people will be used for calculation purposes with an assumption of one event every other week. A per head cost of \$50 is used to calculate revenues of \$32,500. A deduction of 70% yields a gross operating profit of \$9,750.

Combining the two gross operating profits from both dining and events totals \$54,678 annually.

*Guests* – Over a year’s time, 100 guests from each room will eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner at a cost of \$38 per day. Assuming 16 hotel rooms are available, this yields revenue of \$60,800 per year and a gross operating profit of \$18,241.

According to the architect’s report, the cost of renovating the exterior and the first floor could range from \$271,000 to \$790,000. The amount of \$530,000 will be used for this analysis. A loan to value ratio (LTV) of 75% and debt service coverage (DSC) ratio of 1.1 will be used. Based upon the above estimated costs and assumptions, the redevelopment of the first floor into a full service restaurant does meet these requirements. However, these estimates do not include the acquisition of the property. Based upon the remaining funds for debt service, a mortgage for acquisition of \$80,700 can be amortized. The calculations are listed below.

Equity required for renovation = \$132,500

\$530,000 x .75 (LTV) = \$397,500

Mortgage 6% for 15 yrs. = \$40,900/yr.

\$54,678 - \$5,468 (1.1 DSC) = \$49,210

Funds available for acquisition costs - \$8,310

Even though the total capital cost for this option will be less because only the exterior and the first floor are renovated, the cost to renovate is still significant and the cost to acquire is not known. The Inn is currently listed for sale at \$269,000. To allow a developer a return on their investment, it is likely that a user of the first floor will have to be a full service restaurant offering fine dining, a lounge, and very well appointed surroundings. It is clear from other examples throughout New York State that a well appointed restaurant serving fine food can draw diners from up to 50 miles away once a reputation is established and assuming the restaurant is properly marketed. One important issue that must be considered is the apparent inability to get a full liquor license. This is due to the building location in relationship to a church. It is possible, however, to obtain beer and wine licenses.

The income generated from an established restaurant as described above will probably present the opportunity to minimally meet the required cash flow for a developer/owner. One other option that may be feasible is to develop a multi-purpose first floor featuring moderately priced breakfast and lunch, fine dining on limited nights of the week, and/or possibly a bakery or tavern. This option may be feasible and could possibly generate enough revenues if the right mix is developed. However, there is also the possibility that the multi uses could confuse potential customers.

## **MARKET FOR HOTEL/INN ROOMS**

The Sherburne Inn was originally built for the purpose of providing a place along the turnpike from Utica to Binghamton for travelers to stay. In a time when that journey took more than a day, rooms were definitely needed in the Sherburne area. Now, when the journey can be made in a couple hours a place to stay is not always required for travelers. However, there is significant traffic that passes the Inn every day and large attractions in the area that draw visitors from outside the area. The upper two floors of the Inn originally were divided into a number of small rooms. As detailed in the architect's report, while the walls have been demolished, 6-10 units on each floor can likely be created. This would create a 12-20 room inn with rooms sizes to accommodate current travelers.

### **Competition**

Within the fifteen mile market radius, four hotel/motel facilities were identified. These facilities contain 184 rooms. The Colgate Inn in Hamilton and the Howard Johnson Inn in Norwich were the only full service hotels. Also 26 Bed and Breakfasts were identified, estimated to contain 72 rooms. Expanding to the 25 mile market radius three more hotel/motels with 39 rooms and 18 additional Bed and Breakfasts with an estimated 50 rooms were included.

### **Estimate Financial Results**

The architect estimates the cost of developing the two upper floors into hotel rooms to be \$890,500. This includes an elevator and assumes that the exterior and the first floor have already been renovated. If 16 moderate sized rooms can be created, a nightly fee of \$70.00 is realistic when compared to the competition. A conservative 50% occupancy rate is used. Using these rates, \$204,400 will be generated annually. The income is reduced by 40% for operating, management, and affixed and capital reserve expenses. This results in \$122,640 in income. Typical hotel loans require 70%-75% LTV and 1.2 to 1.4 debt service coverage. Based upon the above estimated costs and assumptions, the redevelopment of the upper floors of the Sherburne Inn to hotel rooms does meet these estimates. The addition of hotel rooms also generates additional funds to pay for acquisition costs and creates additional customers for the restaurant. See calculation below:

Equity required for renovation = \$222,625

\$890,500 x .75 (LTV) = \$667,875

Mortgage 6% for 15 yrs. = \$68,766/yr.

\$122,640 - \$49,056 (1.4 DSC) = \$73,584

Funds available for acquisition costs - \$4,818

With its location near Colgate University and other attractions in the area, a 12-20 room renovated Inn can be easily filled during times of specific local events that would draw large numbers of people to Colgate or other area attractions. Travelers to and through the Sherburne area would also likely fill some hotel rooms. To generate the room charges and the occupancy required to justify the acquisition and renovation costs as detailed by the architect, it is clear that a full service facility must be created that will allow the Inn to be seen as a destination in and of itself. To create such a destination, it will require a complete renovation, while providing necessary ancillary services such as parking. The Inn should include a full service restaurant and at least a limited service spa. The development of a limited service spa can provide significant revenues and occupancy. Due to the physical size of the Sherburne Inn, a limited service spa is probably all that can be accommodated.

In 2002, Thoma Development Consultants completed a study of Destination Spas in New York and Pennsylvania. This study revealed nightly rates of hotel rooms with high end spa services at an average of \$532 while moderate spa facilities averaged \$325. A spa associated with the Sherburne Inn would likely be considered a moderate limited service spa due to the small size of the site. For such spas, occupancy rates need to average 61-80%, which is much higher than the overall hotel industry. To undertake such a project would clearly be viewed as high risk to any potential investor. A developer would have to create a facility that would generate its own market while also being able to capture some of the local market on limited occasions.

## **MARKET FOR SMALL SHOPS**

A renovated Sherburne Inn could also house small shops that would not only serve the needs of the community, but also the tourists traveling along Route 12. The Steering Committee has identified a number of uses that would be a welcome addition to the Village. Several of them would fit well into a multi-tenanted Inn. Those uses include a clothing boutique, jewelry store, gift shop, newsstand, bakery, and bookstore. These retail activities could easily serve both markets – residents and tourists. The architect's report identifies 4,156 square feet of rentable commercial space on the first floor only. The potential also exists for shops to be located on the second floor if an elevator is installed.

## Competition

The Village of Sherburne has a pharmacy, grocery store, a couple of gift stores, and a large variety store. There is not much other retail except for restaurants. Focusing on the uses identified above will limit competition and provide needed services to the community. The main competition for any retail in Sherburne are the stores in the large retail centers of Norwich and Hamilton.

## Estimate of Financial Results

As previously mentioned, according to the architect's report, the cost of renovating the exterior and the first floor of the Sherburne Inn could range from \$271,000 to \$790,000. The amount of \$271,000 will be used for this analysis. Based upon the rentable space available (4,156 square feet), renting \$5-\$10 per square foot would yield an income of \$20,780 to \$41,560 annually. If 3,000 square feet of the second floor is also rentable, that could generate between \$15,000-\$30,000 in additional revenue. The use of the second floor will require that an elevator be installed and second floor renovations, thus increasing the renovation cost by \$248,500.

The owner must carry all expenses since the separation of utilities will not be easily accomplished. Expenses will likely approach 25% of gross rents. This generates a gross operating profit of between \$15,585 and \$31,170 for the first floor only. A required debt service coverage ratio of at least 1.2 will reduce the operating profit to \$12,468 and \$24,936. Unless the top rent is received enough funds will not be generated to pay the debt. This analysis also does not include the cost of acquisition or factor in a rent up period. To achieve the highest rent, it is likely that more will have to be spent on the exterior and first floor renovation than the minimum amount.

Equity required for renovation = \$67,750

\$271,000 x .75 (LTV) = \$203,250

Mortgage 6% for 15 yrs. = \$16,291/yr.

\$15,585 - \$3,117 (1.2 DSC) = \$12,468

\$31,170 - \$6,234 (1.2 DSC) = \$24,936

Funds available for acquisition costs - ?

Another issue facing the developer of a multi use Sherburne Inn is the requirement to complete all renovations without all end users committed to space. The project could take a significant number of months to reach a break-even point. Based upon the above estimated costs and assumptions, the redevelopment of the first floor into small shops does not likely meet the proposed debt service coverage requirements. The only way that a use such as described above could be successful is if a much greater equity investment is made by the owner.